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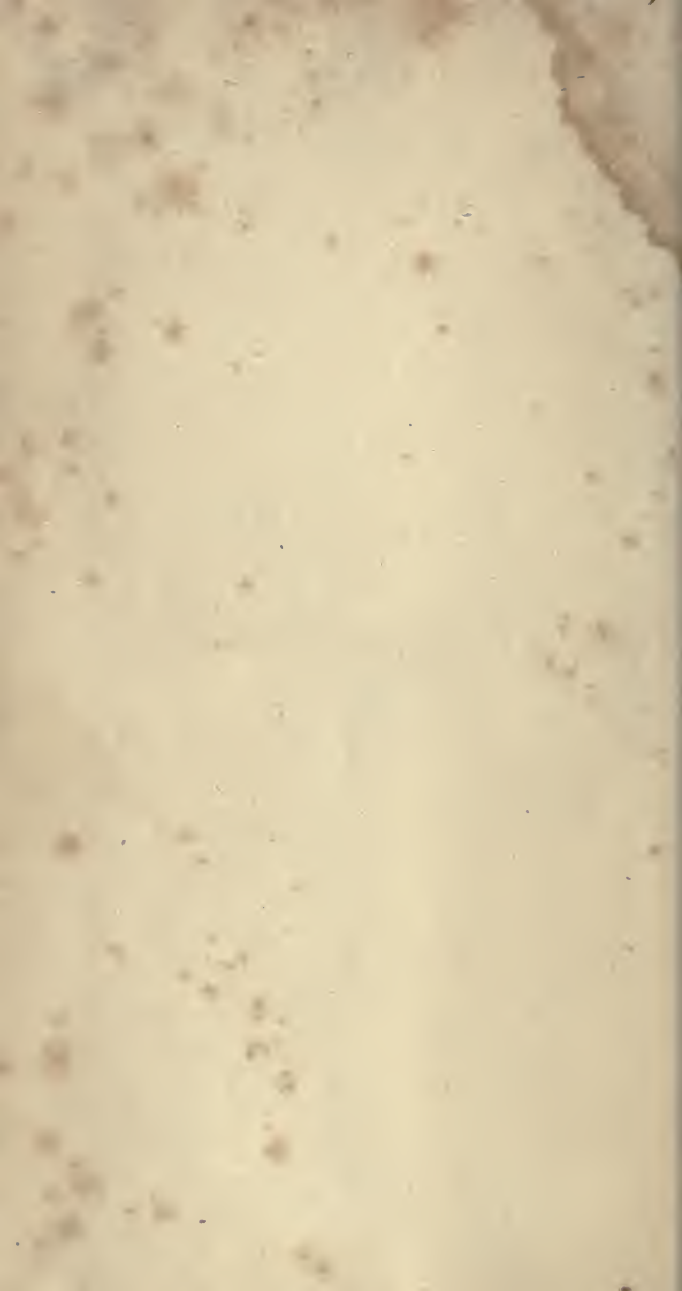
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THE

FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

THE
FRENCH REVOLUTIONS

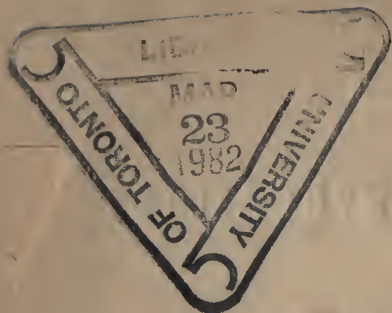
FROM 1789 TO 1849.

BY T. W. REDHEAD.

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HISTORY

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REIGN OF TERROR CONTINUED UNTIL ITS CONCLUSION BY THE
DEATH OF ROBESPIERRE—SEPTEMBER 1793 TO 27th JULY 1794.

THE law of the suspected was not allowed to moulder among the archives of the Republic as a dead letter. Under its operation 100,000 persons were incarcerated in the different towns and communes of France, a large proportion of whom stocked the prisons of Paris. These were multiplied in number, but scarcely sufficed to accommodate the vast concourse of the 'detained.' All classes of the community were included in this proscription, for the crime of aristocracy had sunk even to the lowest grades, and the inmates of the prisons presented heterogeneous assemblages of nobles, ecclesiastics, merchants, tradesmen, and artisans. In almost all the prisons and houses of detention the expenses of maintenance were defrayed by the incarcerated, and the wealthy were allowed such enjoyments and luxuries as were consistent with a state of imprisonment. The poor were supported by the contributions of the rich, upon whom was thus thrown the whole financial burden of the execution of the law. The interiors of these mansions of woe presented extraordinary spectacles, signally illustrative of the buoyant and volatile character of the French. Hanging by the slenderest thread to life, with the axe of the guillotine on their necks, the inmates abandoned themselves to jovial intercourse, pursued the amusements fitted to those who are without a care upon their minds, and in the recesses of jails enacted the frivolities, the arts, and even the vices of society in its most seductive guise. Theatrical representations, concerts, music, poetry, supper parties, intrigues, all proceeded as in the outer world, and even with

greater freedom; for the threshold of danger being entered, terror ceased to exercise its grim sway; and whilst dismay overspread the land, putting an end to all the charities and amenities of life, the prisons alone seemed abodes in which any traces of pleasure or happiness were to be perceived.* A more rigorous system, however, was introduced in proportion as the Jacobins consolidated their power and crushed their various enemies foreign and domestic, since with them victory ever evoked the direst spirit of vengeance. Then all superfluities were retrenched, and an equality of privations established among the various classes of prisoners, in practical accordance with the great dogma of *sans-culottism*. All thenceforth took their meals at common tables, which were supplied by the officers of the prisons from assessments levied on the rich, and who committed, as was natural, the greatest frauds, by furnishing meagre and unwholesome diet. The records which survive of the treatment experienced by the captives subjected to the tyranny of those unfeeling monsters, are replete with lamentations on the horrible substances they were given to eat under the name of food. In addition to this detestable nutriment, all recreations and mitigations of misery were denied to them, and they were made to undergo the severest hardships of which imprisonment is susceptible. Huddled and overcrowded in dungeons destitute of air and light, surrounded by accumulations of uncleanness, exposed to the impurity of fetid vapours, debarred from the benefit of exercise, tormented by the studied indignities and cruelties of their keepers, cut off from communication with the world, beset by the most vile of miscreants suborned to betray them, racked by the constant fear of death—no situation can be supposed more dreadful or trying to the constancy of human nature than that suffered under the bloody rule of the *decemvirs* by their hapless victims.

It was upon the devoted remnant of the illustrious prisoners of the Temple that this inexorable system was first put in force. They had been already deprived of every resource that might tend to cheer or alleviate the sad monotony of confinement, and they were now to endure the last extremities to which the fury of their persecutors could subject them. The only comfort still

* As indicative of the spirit reigning in the prisons may be adduced the following remarks by the author of the Supplement to Madame Roland's *Historical Notices*:—'I have been several times present when one of the actors in the performance of plays at La Force being summoned before the Revolutionary Tribunal—that is to say, called away to death—no other interruption was thereby occasioned beyond the time necessary to provide a substitute for him. Certain observers have affected to discover in this indifference a courage and strength of mind peculiarly honourable to the French character. For my part, I saw in it only a blameable heedlessness, a species of besottedness, in which was extinguished all sensibility for calamities either of self or others.' Vol. ii. p. 287.

allowed them was that of living together, and this was speedily taken from them. On the 3d of July, by a decree of the Convention, the young dauphin or king was torn from the arms of Marie-Antoinette, who struggled to retain him for a whole hour against the efforts of the officers, and only released him from her embrace when overcome by exhaustion and moved by the threats of the officers that they would kill both him and her daughter before her eyes. The poor child was consigned to the care of a ruffian named Simon, who had formerly been a cobbler,* and was selected for his known brutality by the Commune to act as guardian of the prince, and rear him in the school of the sans-enlottes. On the 2d of August the queen herself was removed, and conveyed to the prison of the Conciergerie, preparatory to her trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. There she was immured in a narrow gloomy cell, the only furniture of which was a straw bed covered with a ragged mattress and an old worn-out dirty blanket. Such was the abode, and such the couch, for two long months, of her who had revelled in all the splendour and luxuriance of magnificent palaces. Two gendarmes kept constant watch over her night and day in this dungeon, divided from her only by a broken screen, which served as a curtain to protect her from their unmannerly gaze. But this princess, who had shown herself so giddy and imprudent in the elevation of power and prosperity, displayed in the depths of humiliation and adversity a heroic fortitude which sheds signal lustre upon her character. Unequal to sustain the temptations and blandishments of high fortune, the native virtue and firmness of her mind shone forth when tried by the sharp test of unmitigated calamity. The Committee of Public Safety had resolved, after considerable debate, and only by a majority, that she should be brought to trial. Robespierre opposed the measure, but he was overruled by his colleagues. On the 14th of October, accordingly, she was led before the Revolutionary Tribunal. An immense crowd filled to overflowing the court in which the Tribunal sat. A perfect stillness reigned whilst she was arraigned by the public prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville. The charges he alleged against her were of a vague and preposterous nature, embodying all the wild and

* The young prince was taken to that part of the tower which Louis XVI. had previously occupied; and the manner in which Simon educated him may be judged by the statement of his sister (afterwards the Duchess d'Angouleme), in her interesting history of the confinement of the royal family. She says, 'We sometimes received intelligence of my brother through the municipal officers, but even that did not last long. We heard him every day singing, in company with Simon, the song of La Carmagnole, the Marseillaise Hymn, and a thousand other horrible compositions of the sort. Simon dressed him in a red cap and a *carmagnole* (a small tight jacket), and made him sing at the windows so as to be heard by the guard, and taught him to utter the most dreadful blasphemies and curses against God, his family, and the aristocrats. . . . Simon gave him the coarsest food to eat, and made him by force drink a quantity of wine, which he naturally detested.'—*Relation*, &c. p. 508,

malignant accusations to which she had been exposed during the course of the Revolution, the most heinous of which were her remittances of money to the emperor her brother, and the correspondence she maintained with him to disclose the military plans formed against the Coalition. But the witnesses produced against her totally failed to establish either of these delinquencies, or any of the others fabricated to her detriment. In the entire want of evidence to criminate her, the infamous Hebert was produced to implicate her in a charge of immoral practices with her own son. This wretch had actually, in concert with Pache, Chaumette, David, and Simon, attempted to extract from the young prince and princess revolting confessions against their mother,* and the truth of them was upheld by him with unblushing effrontery. The audience, composed of ferocious Jacobins as it was, manifested indignation at his testimony. Yet the Tribunal, unabashed by the nature of his deposition or the symptoms of disgust it provoked, called upon Marie-Antoinette to reply to the hideous accusation. She, rising with dignity, turned from the villanous countenances of her judges, and exclaimed to the crowd around—‘Human nature relieves me from the necessity of answering such an imputation. I appeal to all mothers here present, and who hear me, whether such a thing is possible!’ Alas, poor queen! a cold shudder thrilled through the assemblage, but not a voice was raised in sympathy or vindication. Her advocate alone, Chaveau-Lagarde, ventured to speak in her behalf, and delivered an eloquent and touching address, fitted to shame her enemies and rebuke their calumnies; but to be accused before the Revolutionary Tribunal was to be condemned; and on the evening of the second day, the 15th, a unanimous judgment of death was pronounced against her.

She was refused the consolations of religion, except through the medium of a constitutional priest, whose services she mildly but resolutely declined. She prayed long and fervently alone, and then throwing herself on the squalid pallet of her cell, slept soundly for some hours. Upon awakening, she wrote a long letter to her sister-in-law, the Princess Elizabeth, full of admirable sen-

* The Duchess d'Angouleme gives an account of her examination by Chaumette, Pache, and David, in which they importuned and intimidated her to extort avowals for upwards of three hours. She says, ‘Chaumette then examined me respecting a thousand disgusting things of which my mother and my aunt were accused. I was completely overcome by these insulting questions, and felt so indignant, that notwithstanding the terror I was in, I could not prevent myself from saying that the whole was a tissue of infamous calumny and falsehood. They, however, continued to press these questions on me, totally regardless of my tears and my distress. They said some things to me the sense of which I did not understand, but what I did comprehend was so horrible, that I shuddered and wept with indignation.’—*Relation*, &c. p. 516. It is to be observed that the princess was scarcely then twelve years of age, having been born on the 22d October 1781. The dauphin was nearly four years younger.

timents of resignation and forgiveness; and early in the morning of the 16th, she was placed in the common tumbril or cart used for the conveyance of prisoners, with her hands tied behind her back, and a constitutional priest by her side, whose exhortations she refused to heed. She had cut off her hair with her own hands, and she was clad in a loose robe of white. Pale and emaciated in her features, her countenance still wore that expression of dignity which her long sufferings had failed to obliterate. The streets were lined with two rows of National Guards, and filled with the barbarian multitude, who pursued her with yells of execration. By a long circuit she was conducted to the same Place de la Revolution on which her husband had before perished; and she ascended the scaffold with a firm and composed demeanour. After a short prayer, she gave herself into the hands of the executioner, her last words being, 'Farewell, my beloved children! I go to join your father.' The executioner held up her head, and showed it streaming with blood to the exulting horde of cannibals.

Such was the end of Marie-Antoinette, in the thirty-eighth year of her age. A daughter of the oldest monarchical house in Europe, and wife to the greatest and most absolute of its princes, she seemed destined to pass through life in the sunshine of earthly grandeur and happiness; but her nativity was cast in an evil hour, and she became the victim of a convulsion which her own indiscretions, perhaps perfidies, and the passions of her nearest relatives, had tended in a great measure to provoke and aggravate. It was the invasion of the Austrian armies which exasperated the Jacobins to immolate her; and as they had thrown the head of her husband, a few months previously, in defiance at the coalesced sovereigns of Europe, so they now hurled hers in their teeth, even when they swarmed with their hosts on all the frontiers of France, saying, 'The Romans sold the ground occupied by Hannibal before their city; we strike off the heads of those dearest to the tyrants who invade our country!'

With Marie-Antoinette the Jacobins commenced that long career of blood which for nearly a year rendered Paris the continual theatre of wholesale murder. The Girondins next fell a prey to their vengeance. Their death had been often vociferously demanded at the bar of the National Convention by deputations from the sections and the clubs, but the Committee of Public Safety had hesitated to smite them until the complete suppression of the federalist revolt. After that event, it had caused seventy-three more of the party—members of the Convention, who had secretly signed a protest, subsequently divulged, against the outrages of the 31st May and 2d June—to be arrested in the hall of the Assembly itself. Of the twenty-two

proscripts of the 2d of June, some had escaped, as has been stated; the remainder were incarcerated in the Conciergerie, to await their doom. With members of the Committee of Twelve, they were twenty-one in number. The whole were arraigned in one act of accusation, drawn up by Amar in the name of the Committee of General Security. It was of prodigious length, and recapitulated all the pretended treasons against the people, which had been charged against them at the period of their arrest. The most remarkable articles of the indictment, however, were those in which they were identified with the prime minister of Great Britain, Mr Pitt. These were thus couched: 'The course of the conspirators was in all things conformable to that of the enemies of France, and especially of the English. Pitt strove to disgrace the rising republic in the eyes of Europe; Brissot and his accomplices have laboured assiduously to calumniate it; they have never ceased to denounce all its defenders as brigands and men of blood; their writings and their speeches differed in nothing from those of the English ministers and the slanderers in their pay. Pitt strove to degrade and dissolve the Convention; they have put every engine at work likewise to dishonour and dissolve it. Pitt was intent to assassinate the faithful representatives of the people; they have endeavoured several times to procure the murder of part of their colleagues, and they actually assassinated Marat and Lepelletier. Pitt sought to destroy Paris; they have done all in their power to destroy it. Pitt laboured to arm all the powers against France; they declared war against all the powers.' Several witnesses were examined in support of the charges, whose evidence was of the loosest and vaguest description, tending to fix upon them no definite crime beyond what their whole career had rendered patent. The most infamous of men were arrayed to bear testimony for the prosecution. Pache, Chaumette, Hebert, Fabre d'Eglantine, and Chabot, figured as principal testifiers to the guilt of the accused. Vergniaud, Brissot, Gensonné, and Valazé, had little difficulty in confounding such base traducers; and their triumph was so complete, that the Jacobins began to fear that a popular movement might be excited in their favour, especially as Vergniaud, stirred by the great stake he played for, put forth all the eloquence for which he was so famous. The proceedings grew protracted, and had already lasted six days. The Jacobin Club, enraged beyond measure at this delay, sent a deputation to the Convention insisting upon an acceleration of the trial. Robespierre, in pursuance of this authoritative demand, moved that when a trial had lasted three days, the jury should be competent to declare themselves satisfied, and pronounce their verdict accordingly. So utterly intimidated was the Convention, that without a single objection being raised, this iniquitous motion was carried, and converted into a decree.

Thus empowered to proceed at once to a conviction, the jurymen, after a further delay of some hours, declared themselves satisfied in terms of the decree, and retired to consider their verdict. It was late in the evening of the 30th of October when they withdrew from the court, which they left filled with an eager and anxious multitude, breathlessly awaiting the predetermined judgment upon the illustrious prisoners. These stood in the various attitudes befitting their several temperaments; some were stern and scornful, others gay and lively; not one betokened the slightest dejection or emotion of fear. At midnight the jurymen returned into their box; the buzz of expectation was instantly hushed into silence; and amidst the darkness of that gloomy hour the foreman pronounced, with some appearance of sensibility, the verdict of guilty. Sentence of death immediately followed, simply intimated by the president of the Tribunal. Vergniaud essayed to speak, but his voice was stifled by clamour. Valazé drew a poniard and stabbed himself to the heart. Lasource exclaimed above the din, 'I die at a time when the people have lost their reason; you will die when they have recovered it'—applying to his judges the fine saying of the ancient sage. The gendarmes surrounded them, and hurried them back to prison, they singing in chorus the verses of the Marseillaise.

They passed the night together, after partaking a last meal in company. Vergniaud had been supplied with poison by the care of a friend, but he threw it away, declaring he would die with his companions. He spoke with melancholy pathos of the ruin that had befallen liberty, and in these his final accents still stirred the imaginations of his hearers. The philosophy of death was discussed among them with the gravity and earnestness of men about to test the grand mystery of creation. Ducos recited poems of his own composition, dedicated to liberty and to France, and in these they all joined until they were summoned to the fatal cart. As the melancholy procession moved along the route, they again struck up, and continued to chant the animating strains of the Marseillaise. On reaching the foot of the scaffold, they alighted and embraced, shouting with one accord, *Vive la République!* Ascending the scaffold, they suffered in succession, each vowing to the last his attachment to liberty, and hatred of tyranny in all shapes. With them was finally extinguished the illustrious but misguided party of the Gironde. Full of the pride of human pretension, they too recklessly pulled down a throne under the ruins of which they were almost immediately buried. More sympathy and respect might be felt for them and their untimely fate, but that they themselves evinced neither towards the victims they aided to strike. The cruel captivity to which Louis XVI. and his hapless family were consigned never drew from them a passing remonstrance, or the smallest manifestation of interest; nor is there to

be found in any of the writings they have left behind them a single expression of commiseration in regard to the dethroned monarch and his melancholy fate. Fallen greatness was indifferent in their eyes, showing that they lacked true magnanimity of mind and the heroism which might render them superior at once to their own passions and the ignoble dread of a besotted multitude.

Three victims of very different characters followed them in quick succession to the goal to which virtue, vice, old age, and youth were alike hurrying. These were Philip Egalité, Madame Roland, and Bailly. The first, even with all the baseness of his compliances and his adulation of vile demagogues, could not expiate the crime of being a Bourbon. It had been thought to save him by banishing him to Marseilles, but he was speedily brought back, and now an object of universal abhorrence, was sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal. In his last moments he displayed a stolid composure, which partook of indifference at once to life and to the higher interests of eternity. The night before his execution he had a sumptuous repast prepared, which he devoured with more than usual appetite, and in the morning, took his place in the cart without giving any outward token of feeling or apprehension. He was conducted past his splendid mansion of the Palais-Royal, which had been so often the scene of his voluptuous festivities, and with a refined cruelty he was halted before it for some twenty minutes or more. This has given rise to a ridiculous story, that Robespierre had sought from him the hand of his daughter in marriage, and that an opportunity was thus afforded him of at length yielding to the sacrifice which he had hitherto firmly repudiated. The situation of all the parties forbid the possibility of such a union at such a time, even if it were to be supposed that Robespierre, after climbing to the height of power on the backs of the sans-culottes, would have perilled its continuance by a step so contradictory to his character and his whole career. On the scaffold the Duke of Orleans maintained the same callous cynicism, and had his head struck off amidst the hootings of the mob, whose favour he had impoverished himself to purchase.

Madame Roland had languished in prison since the fatal night of her pilgrimage to the Convention on the 31st of May. She had occupied herself in composing the record of her early life, and her historical notices of the events and men of her time, which have been preserved, and form one of the most instructive collections of the revolutionary writers. The incredible fortitude of mind with which she was gifted sustained her under all the afflictions and privations of her long captivity. A wife and a mother, she was kept in ignorance of the fate both of her husband and of her daughter. Anxiety for them and their welfare, sorrow for the ruin of that liberty she had so ardently dreamt of, chiefly engaged her thoughts. The books in which she found food for reflection and

reminiscences of happiness in the inimitable pictures of nature, were Shaftesbury and Thomson; for she boasted a partiality to English literature. But wearied at length with the cheerless monotony of her dungeon, she had determined, after long consideration, to terminate her existence, moved chiefly thereto by the hope that if she avoided a judicial condemnation, the small property she possessed would be saved to her child. Preparatory to executing this fatal resolution she committed to paper what she calls '*My last thoughts*;'* but she was happily averted from her purpose by being summoned to attend as a witness on the trial of her friends the Girondins. The very day following their execution she herself succeeded them at the bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal. In accordance with a practice which has always prevailed in the criminal jurisprudence of France, and which was pushed to the last extremity at this period, she was subjected to a long and harassing interrogatory, in which every effort of ingenuity and malice was exerted to wring from her damaging avowals, or entangle her in contradictions; but she withstood the ordeal with incomparable readiness and presence of mind, and parried the thrusts of both accusers and judges. Witnesses were then produced against her, the gist of whose testimony bore to the effect that she had maintained intimate relations with the Girondins, who being now in the category of convicted traitors, involved in the same brand all who had been guilty of associating with them. Upon this the jurymen had no difficulty in condemning her as implicated in their conspiracy, and she was appointed to be executed on the 8th of November. On hearing her sentence, she said to her judges, 'You deem me worthy to partake the fate of the great men whom you have assassinated; I will endeavour to bear to the scaffold the same courage that they displayed.' Being removed to the Conciergerie after judgment was pronounced, she passed her last night in the same cell which had been the abode of Charlotte Corday and Marie-Antoinette: strange association of females, each heroic in her vein, and yet with shades of character as various as their origins and apparent destinies! In the morning, she dedicated more than usual care to her toilet, and dressed herself in a garment of snowy white, over which her long black hair hung in rich clusters and striking contrast. She was accompanied to the place of punishment by a fellow-sufferer, who was overwhelmed with a sense of his misfortune. She sought to cheer him, and by sprightly sallies rallied his drooping spirits, bringing more than once to his wan cheeks a fleeting smile. She was generous enough to insist with the executioner that this unfortunate person should be executed before her, to spare him the pain of seeing her perish; but

* These occur in the second volume of her Memoirs, page 214. The motto prefixed to them is: '*To be, or not to be; that is the question. It will soon be resolved for me.*'

that functionary opposed the sad arrangement, alleging that his orders were she should suffer first. 'You cannot, I am sure,' she said to him with a smile, 'refuse the last request of a woman.' Her ingratiating appeal was successful, and her companion had the consolation of dying before her. When she mounted on the scaffold, she bowed her head towards the colossal statue of Liberty, and exclaimed, 'Oh, liberty! what crimes are committed in thy name!' She placed her head beneath the axe, and in a moment it was severed from her body. She was in the thirty-seventh year of her age. Her husband ended his life almost at the same moment, as if by some previous concert. He had been concealed at Rouen since his departure from Paris. Leaving his asylum, he wandered out upon the high-road, and in an avenue of trees leading to a private residence, upwards of twelve miles from the city, his body was found extended on the green sod in tranquil death, on the morning of the 15th of November. In his pocket was a note, in which was written these words: 'Whoever may find me lying here, respect my remains. They are those of a man who devoted his life to be useful, and who has died because he lived virtuous and honest.'

Bailly—the first president of the National Assembly, the first mayor of Paris, he who devoted himself with such untiring zeal and energy to provide food for the inhabitants of Paris during the grievous winter of 1789-90—had thought it prudent to fly from Paris at the era of the 10th of August; and having found an asylum on the coast of the Channel, he might have easily escaped to England; but he was reluctant to leave his country, hoping that these evil times would be but transitory, and thus delaying, he was at length tracked out and seized. Being carried to Paris, he was produced as a witness to depose against Marie-Antoinette, and his refusal to testify to her prejudice destroyed any chance he might have of conciliating the wrath of his enemies. The rage of the multitude was excited against him in the most furious degree, on account of the part he had borne in the proclamation of martial law, and the slaughter which followed it after the king's return from Varennes. His condemnation before the Revolutionary Tribunal was a matter of course, for he was accused, with more show of probability than usual, of having caused to be shed the precious blood of the sovereign people. In order that he might expiate this crime in a most signal manner, he was appointed to be executed on the scene of the massacre itself—namely, on the Champ de Mars. Thither, accordingly, he was conducted, surrounded by a countless throng of the vilest rabble, who heaped upon him fiendish execrations. A red flag was carried before him, the same he had unfurled upon the melancholy occasion of the 17th of July, and ever and anon fluttered in his face. Upon reaching the Champ de Mars,

he was about to ascend the scaffold, when a voice was heard from the crowd crying that the field of the federation ought not to be polluted by the blood of an assassin. Straightway the mob seized and dragged him over the ground, beating him with their fists and pelting him with mud. For several hours they thus buffeted and sported with him, the old man walking amongst them with difficulty, for his hands were tied behind his back, and the soil was slippery, a deluge of rain falling at the time. Thus, bare-headed, and exhausted with fatigue and suffering, he was at last led to a dunghill on the margin of the river nearly opposite to Chaillot, a village in which he had lived for many years, and had composed most of his scientific works. Here, after some delay, the guillotine was adjusted. During the operation, one of the ruffians near him said, 'Ah, Bailly, thou tremblest!' 'It is not from fear, friend,' Bailly replied, 'but from cold.' In a few moments afterwards he was released from his savage tormentors by the stroke of death. Such the horrible fate of one of the most virtuous and noble-hearted men, who had struggled in the first hours of difficulty and danger to secure a rational freedom to the French nation.

Barnave, Duport de Tertre, Adam Lux of Strasburg, whose only crime was having expressed an intention to kill himself at the bar of the Convention, to mark his detestation of the Jacobin rule; Manuel, Biron, Houchard, the conqueror of Hondtschoote; Malesherbes, the defender of Louis XVI.; and numerous other distinguished personages, either from the parts they had played in the Revolution, or from their personal qualities, followed each other in rapid succession to the scaffold. The massacres that had taken place in the departments seemed to whet the appetite of the Parisian Jacobins for similar indulgences. On all the frontiers of the Republic these massacres as yet far exceeded the measure of blood spilt in the metropolis. In addition to their devastations and exterminations at Lyons, Toulon, Marseilles, Bordeaux, in La Vendée, and other districts of the south and west, St Just was decimating Alsace and Lorraine on the east, and Lebon was rivalling Carrier in the departments of the north. Thus, at the close of this memorable year, 1793—the most extraordinary that occurs in the annals of any nation since the creation of the globe—murder was the system of government throughout the wide expanse of France. Ushered in by the execution of Louis XVI., marked in its progress by the invasion of five large armies on every assailable side of France, whilst torn by the great insurrection of La Vendée and the federalist revolt of the Girondins, it still saw at its termination France standing one and indivisible, with a government nominally democratic in the widest sense, but in reality the most tyrannical and despotic that ever existed on the earth. Not the mere sword or guillotine

was its instrument of action, but an organisation of terror, complete in its ramifications, and spread into every corner of the empire. This was in accordance with the declaration of Robespierre himself, for, as he said, 'The principle of democratic government is virtue, and its engine whilst establishing itself is terror.' To all the horrors of such a system was added a famine more terrible than had prevailed even in 1790. Notwithstanding the law of the maximum, which the people had been delusively taught to regard as the panacea of all their evils, not only corn, but provisions of every kind, were scarcer than ever. The difficulty of supplying Paris with food from day to day was prodigious. The entire operation devolved on the agency of the government, which put in force for the purpose all the powers of its unlimited despotism. The daily ration for the whole population in each article of subsistence was fixed, and this stinted allowance gave only half a pound of meat to each family per head once every five days. The bread furnished by the bakers was of the blackest and coarsest description, and likewise regulated in quantity according to the mouths of each family. With regard to butcher meat, a general fast was at length proclaimed to last for six weeks, Barrère urging its necessity, by affirming that without it they would soon have neither meat nor candles. As was inevitable in such a direful emergency, the law of the maximum was evaded, and the poorer classes suffered most from its impolitic pressure, affording a striking example of the utter inutility of mere force to control the operations of nature or of commerce. The people exercised the sovereign sway, and they had obtained every law which in their ignorance they supposed would render provisions cheap and abundant; yet never had they endured greater privations, or never was their incapacity to exercise the functions of administration more glaringly displayed.

With the destruction of each successive party in the Revolution, it had been always hoped that civil dissensions would cease, and that all would thenceforth be united in one bond of concord. The Royalists, Monarchists, Constitutionals, and Girondins, had been in their turns swept from the stage, until the Jacobins alone survived to wield the mastery. But however compact and united a party may seem while struggling for supremacy, the moment it achieves the victory, and annihilates its rivals, it splits infallibly into competing sections. This result did not fail to accrue in the present instance. Even before the fall of the Girondins, Danton had been assailed, as infected with the leprosy of moderation. He had taken no active part in the event of the 2d of June, and had even condemned the violence perpetrated on the national representation upon that occasion. Subsequently he had taken the imprudent resolution, acting upon the insidious counsel of Robespierre, of withdrawing from Paris, and retiring to his native

place of Arcis-sur-l'Aube. To be lost sight of in a revolution even for the shortest interval is to lose ground almost irrecoverably. When he now reappeared, the course of things had already undergone a material change, and he emerged from his retreat as it were a stranger on a new stage. He had lost that fiery ardour which earlier distinguished him in collisions with powers and parties of a superior grade, and he was unfitted to contend against the inferior demagogues whom his own success had tended to generate and exalt. The natural lethargy of his temperament incapacitated him for the incessant exertion which was requisite to insure pre-eminence, and before the crafty and indefatigable Robespierre he had fallen to an immeasurable distance. Although as deeply imbrued in blood as any actor in the Revolution, he recoiled from shedding it when he deemed it unnecessary to the stability of the Revolution. Not sharing the malignant suspicions of Robespierre touching the actual treachery of the Girondins, he would, if possible, have formed a union with them; but they having repelled all advances on his part, he had been content that they should be excluded from the Convention, viewing them as impediments in the way of saving the Revolution, but in a manner which might still possess some appearance of legality. To their violent death he was decidedly opposed; and holding that the crisis of danger was passed, inclined to the opinion that a system of lenity ought thenceforth to be adopted, in order finally to terminate the Revolution, and consolidate it upon a firm basis of order and union. Consequently he viewed with repugnance the course of extreme severity still pursued by the Committee of Public Safety. Nevertheless he had not openly avowed his disapprobation; but the tendencies of men conspicuous on the arena of public life are just as certainly divined from silence or inaction as from more decisive demonstrations. Hence he was recognised as the head of the new party of Moderates, which ostensibly comprised but few members, although in reality it included the terror-stricken bulk of the Convention. With his old influence over the Cordeliers, therefore, he might still prove a formidable opponent, although his immediate associates comprehended simply Camille-Desmoulins, Legendre, Herault de Séchelles, Phillippeaux, and a few others.

On the other hand was the party of the Anarchists, who had, in truth, overmastered the Girondins. These possessed the Commune, which was well disposed to contest the power of the Convention and the Committee, which it sought by extravagant popular doctrines to outbid in the estimation of the rabble. These Anarchists had inherited all the peculiar doctrines of Marat, and in some particulars had even improved upon them. That singular fanatic, for instance, had not assailed the Christian religion, whereas they had succeeded in having it abolished, and

the worship of Reason substituted in its stead. The principal among them were Hebert, Momoro, Chaumette, Ronsin, general of the revolutionary army, Anacharsis Clootz, Vincent, and Maillard. The plan of government they aimed to establish was derived from the principle on which the revolutionary army and tribunal had been instituted. The chief duties of a government suitable to France at the moment, they held, were to fight and to condemn. Hence they would have two supreme magistrates of the Republic, a grand judge and a generalissimo—the one placed at the head of a supreme tribunal, and the other at the head of a military council. Ronsin aspired to be this generalissimo, and Pache, who, with his usual cunning, refrained from absolutely identifying himself with them, was marked out as the grand judge.

Besides the more decided parties of the Moderates and Anarchists, there existed another, which was rather a class of men than a party, since it was without political aim or design. It comprised several members of the Convention, some wealthy bankers, and sundry foreigners, the whole being classed as *equivocals* or *indulgents*. They were for the most part persons who from great poverty had suddenly risen to affluence, and who, with the usual inflation of upstarts, displayed an offensive laxity and dissoluteness of manners. Their fortunes had been acquired by stock-jobbing, by missions to the armies and provinces, and by various other devices, among which one was the obtaining, altering, and even forging of decrees of the Convention. They all belonged to the ranks of the Mountain, and the chief among them were Julien, Fabre d'Eglantine, Chabot, Delaunay, Bazire, Thuriot, Lacroix, members of the Convention; two brothers called Frey, bankers; Proly, Pereyra, and Guzman, foreigners. From the prevalent misery of the people, and the austere temper of the times, great discredit was attached to flagrant violations of decorum and morality, and the denomination of Indulgents which characterised these men was expressive, not of charity towards the crimes and delinquencies of others, but of their own abandonment to the ways of flagitiousness in vice and dishonesty. As they had individual relations with many of the Moderates and Anarchists, some part of their infamy attached to both of these parties; and when it suited the enemies of either, it was easy to class them together, and conjoin them in a common denunciation as the *corrupt*. This facility afforded an excellent advantage to Robespierre, who, himself most correct and scrupulous in his course of life, incontestably superior to the allurements of pleasure or the love of money, could discourse admirably as a censor, and uphold in profitable contrast the standard of virtue and rectitude.

The Committee of Public Safety was naturally inimical, both

through policy and through inclination, to these several parties. The lust of dominion was paramount within it, rendering it impatient of opposition, or even of censure; moreover, illusions of human perfectibility swam in the heads of its ruling members, which exalted them into the belief, first, of their own immaculateness, and secondly, of their holding the mission to purge the world of the wicked, and establish the reign of regenerated humanity. Thus, upon the motion of St Just, the Convention solemnly decreed *that justice, probity, and all the republican virtues should be made the order of the day*. The Anarchists, as well from their greater activity as from their revolting doctrines, chiefly attracted the apprehension and the animosity of the Committee. Their extravagances with regard to religion exposed them to a crushing assault. This Robespierre undertook to make, and he executed it with consummate skill. The theatre he selected for his operations was still the club of his faithful Jacobins. Taking the opportunity of a violent tirade by Hebert touching the dangers yet threatening true patriots from the machinations of the enemies of the people, he launched forth into an emphatic condemnation of the impious farce that had been enacted with regard to the worship of Reason, attributing it, as was usual with him, to the agents of foreign powers bribed to bring discredit on the Revolution. After rebuking with scorn the revolting mummeries that had been practised in the inauguration of the new faith, he said, ‘Atheism is essentially aristocratic. The idea of a great Being, on the contrary, watching over oppressed innocence, and punishing triumphant guilt, is essentially popular. The people, the unfortunate, respond with inward satisfaction to my words. They who disapprove and ridicule them, can belong only to the rich and the criminal. I have been from early years an indifferent Catholic; but I have been the warm friend and earnest defender of the human kind. I lay the greater stress on that account to the moral and political ideas which I have expounded to you. *If God did not exist, it would behove man to invent him.*’* To enforce the opinion that foreigners were at the bottom of this infidel movement, he proposed that Proly and three others, whom he described as the creatures of Lebrun, should be expelled from the society, and that a purifying scrutiny should be instituted of all the members. Both these motions were carried by tumultuous acclamation.

By means of this process of purification he obtained the power of expelling or retaining all whom he chose on the list of the society. As each name was called, its owner had to undergo a species of inquisition into his conduct and principles, and he sat as the supreme arbiter, the true *Censor Morum*, over the fate and reputation of his colleagues. Before him the Anarchists and

* This was an expression of Voltaire.

Moderates had to plead their several causes; and amidst their mutual denunciations he dispensed his fiat of approval or censure as seemed fitting to his unerring judgment. Danton and Hebert, Camille-Desmoulins and Vincent, Herault de Séchelles and Momoro, had all to appear and vindicate themselves before his stern tribunal. Danton was warm and indignant in his defence against the accusations levelled at him, principally in Hebert's detestable paper, the *Père Duchesne*. 'Have I then lost,' he exclaimed, 'those features which characterise the face of a free man? Am I no longer the same who was at your side in every critical conjuncture?' He denied the imputation that he had amassed a large fortune, and challenged the closest investigation into his whole career. Robespierre rose with infinite policy to speak in his behalf, and threw over him, as it were, the shield of a generous protection. 'I may be mistaken respecting Danton,' he said, 'but I have known him familiarly, and I think he is praiseworthy. I have watched him in his political associations; differences of opinion led me to study him with attention, sometimes to regard him with anger: he was slow, I admit, to suspect Dumouriez; he did not hate Brissot and his accomplices cordially enough; but if he were not always of the same sentiments as myself, am I thence to infer that he betrayed the country?' This testimony to the zeal and patriotism of Danton was of course sufficient; and amidst the loud applause of the club, he received the fraternal embrace of the president. Robespierre pursued the same course with regard to Desmoulins, whom he vindicated, but still in the language of a forgiving and indulgent master. 'Camille is weak,' he said, 'and confiding, but he has always been a Republican. He loved Mirabeau, Lameth, Dillon; but he has broken his idols as soon as he was undeceived. Let him pursue his career, and be more cautious in future.' Thus Camille-Desmoulins was likewise admitted with applause. The leaders of the Anarchists themselves were allowed to pass muster, but only after going through the ordeal of searching examinations. Anacharsis Clootz, however, was an exception. Robespierre caused his expulsion with ignominy. He was an Atheist to the pitch of fanaticism, and therefore obnoxious to the dictator. He was a noble too, rich, and a foreigner. 'The Jacobins will never regard,' Robespierre said, 'as a friend of the people this pretended sans-culotte, who is a Prussian and a baron, who possesses an income of 100,000 livres, who dines with conspirator bankers, and who is the orator, not of the French people, but of the human race.' With this sarcastic anathema the wretched Clootz was thrust forth from the pale of the Jacobin Club. Moreover, as a general rule, it was determined, at the instance of Robespierre, that all nobles, priests, bankers, and foreigners, should be excluded, without distinction, from that high society.

Preparatory to the blow that the Committee intended to strike against the Anarchists, it took measures still farther to concentrate authority within itself. The local administrations and revolutionary committees throughout the country arrogated and exercised powers which clogged and clashed with the supremacy of the Convention. These were now curtailed of any prerogatives independent of the central government, such as levying men or taxes, sending delegates into other places, or corresponding with each other. No ordinances were to avail save those of the Convention, whose decrees were to be henceforth accredited and transmitted under the name of the *Bulletin des Lois*, in a more formal and certain manner than heretofore, by a commission specially appointed for the purpose. This measure was aimed principally at the Commune of Paris and the sectional committees which depended on it, and which were accustomed to make arrests and requisitions without the cognisance of the government. These were for the future to communicate their proceedings solely to the Committee of General Security, which being in subordination to the Committee of Public Safety, the effective control of the government was thereby insured. The Commune did not attempt to resist the execution of these measures, but on the contrary, through its procureur-general Chaumette, made a show of very cordial submission. It likewise abrogated all its resolutions touching religion, and in deference to the declaration of Robespierre as to the absolute freedom of worship allowed by the Republic, it again threw open the churches to the services of Christianity for those who thought fit to celebrate them. Notwithstanding this obedience and contrition, complaints were made in the Convention of the contumacious conduct and ultra-revolutionary manifestations of Vincent, the secretary of the minister at war; Ronsin, general of the revolutionary army; and Maillard, commissioner at Bordeaux, who by the tacit permission of the Committee were placed under arrest. At the same time the Committee itself issued warrants of apprehension against Proly, Dubuisson, Desfieux, and Pereyra, the four who had been expelled from the Jacobins by Robespierre as corrupt and corrupting agents of foreign powers; and against Bazire, Chabot, Delaunay, and Julien, as belonging to the class of Equivocals, and suspected of being engaged in a scandalous intrigue to tamper with the financial decrees of the Convention.

These steps, affecting as they did both parties, took each of them by surprise, and excited amongst the Anarchists especially the utmost wrath. The Cordeliers manifested profound indignation, and drew up an energetic remonstrance against the persecution of three such undoubted patriots as Vincent, Maillard, and Ronsin; and Hebert obtained even from the Jacobins a resolution to the effect that the charges against them should be promptly investigated, in order that their guilt or innocence might be at once made

manifest. The rage of the Anarchists, however, was directed not so much against the Committee, of whom they stood in wholesome awe, as against the Moderates, who had been instrumental in procuring the arrest of their three leaders. A furious paper war had for some time raged between Hebert, in his *Père Duchesne*, and Camille-Desmoulins, in a journal he edited called the *Vieux-Cordelier*, which was now prosecuted with more bitterness than ever. Robespierre and his colleagues perceived this quarrel with complacency, since from the divisions of their adversaries they hoped to make an easy conquest over both. Their angry recriminations, therefore, were fomented rather than discountenanced; and Robespierre continued to be appealed to by each in the debates of the Jacobin Club as the disinterested and impartial umpire. But Camille at length ventured to assail the government itself and the tyrannical system upon which it acted. He was a man of education, and wrote with great force, point, and even elegance. Applying to the state of France at the moment the celebrated description by Tacitus of Rome under Nero, he portrayed it in a professed allusion to that epoch. 'Under Nero,' he said, 'it was necessary to manifest satisfaction at the death of a friend or kinsman, to avoid incurring the same fate. Several whose nearest relatives he had put to death, went publicly to render thanks to the gods. Above all, it was requisite to have an air of contentment; an expression of fear might be construed into an indication of guilt. Everything gave umbrage to the tyrant. Had a citizen popularity?—he was a rival of the prince, who might excite a civil war. He was *suspected*. Did he shun popularity, on the contrary, and keep in retirement within his own house?—such a secluded life gave rise to observation and doubtful surmises. *Suspected*. Was he rich?—there was great danger that the people might be corrupted by his largesses. *Suspected*. Was he poor?—he must be yet more narrowly watched, for none so adventurous as he who possesses nothing. *Suspected*. Was he thoughtful and melancholy in deportment, and negligent in his dress?—he was lamenting that public affairs were progressing prosperously. *Suspected*. Did he take recreation, and indulge in festivities?—it was because things wore a gloomy aspect. *Suspected*. Was he virtuous and austere in his manners?—he implied censure of the court. *Suspected*. Was he a philosopher, an orator, a poet?—he was intent to eclipse with his renown the rulers of the land. *Suspected*. Had he, in fine, acquired reputation in war?—he was only more dangerous from his talents; he must be made away with, or promptly removed from the army. *Suspected*.'

Such was the tone which Desmoulins began to give to his publication, and which speedily roused the ire of Robespierre, for it touched him to the quick both in his capacity of dictator and in his vanity as a writer, since he prided himself, with some justice, on

his powers of composition. Consequently, although severe in his strictures against Hebert, and betraying at all times a deep-rooted animosity against him, he countenanced with more favour his invectives against Desmoulins and the Moderates. Not judging the time come, however, to break with the latter altogether, he damaged them with insidious art by affected pity and consideration for the indiscretion of their advocate. He allowed that Camille was of an excellent character, but that his writings were imprudent, as was shown by the joy they gave to aristocrats. He said that he had translated Tacitus without understanding him, that he was to be treated as a thoughtless child who played with weapons and made a mischievous use of them, and that the best plan would be to pardon him, and burn his papers. This proposal was rather too much for the pride of authorship to bear, and Camille, yielding to his irritation, cried out, 'Burning is not answering.' Straightway Robespierre gave vent to the virulence that really rankled within him. 'Well, then,' he exclaimed in an ebullition of wrath, 'let us not burn, but answer. Let Camille's numbers be immediately read. Since he will have it so, let him be covered with ignominy; let not the Society restrain its indignation, since he persists in defending his diatribes and his dangerous principles. The man who adheres so tenaciously to perfidious writings is perhaps more than misled. Had he written in the mere simplicity of his heart, he would not have ventured to uphold works condemned by patriots and applauded by counter-revolutionists. His courage bears evident marks of a borrowed stimulus. It reveals the hidden persons under whose dictation Camille has written his journal; it reveals that he is the organ of a villanous faction, which has borrowed his pen to circulate its poison with greater boldness and effect.' Camille strove in vain to appease the exasperated decemvir; he was not listened to, and his writings were appointed to be read, in order that a judgment might be passed upon them. This was the first open outbreak between Robespierre and the Dantonists; and with his accustomed artifice, he had given to a premeditated purpose the appearance of a sudden and unmerited provocation.

The explosion was most unexpected on the part of the Moderates, who, trusting to the sentiments of justice and humanity continually lauded and invoked by Robespierre, had still cherished the forlorn hope of detaching him from the sanguinary section of the Committee, represented by St Just, Collot d'Herbois, Couthon, and Billand-Varennnes. Possessing the extraordinary influence he did over opinion, Robespierre could throw irresistible weight into any party he embraced, and it henceforth depended upon him alone in what spirit the government should be conducted. But unhappily, overpowering considerations impelled him to make common cause with his colleagues of the Committee. Firstly, he had vowed the

destruction of the Hebertists and ultra-revolutionists, and to effect this, the Moderates were not able to afford him the requisite aid, since they had lost all popular support, even to Danton's own club of the Cordeliers, whence Camille-Desmoulins had been expelled under circumstances of indignity; secondly, by coalescing with the Moderates, he gave himself a rival in command—namely, Danton, whose revolutionary reputation in moments of emergency recurred to eclipse his own—whereas by combining with his colleagues, he relieved himself of all disparaging competition, and secured an incontestable supremacy over the government. Hence all motives of policy, ambition, and pride concurred in overruling the tendencies that he might possibly feel towards Danton, both from old associations and from a real predilection for the opinions he then advocated. Accordingly, after the manner of the Roman triumvirs, he formed a compact with St Just, Collot, and Billaud, giving up to them Danton and the Moderates, they surrendering to him Hebert and the Anarchists. The existence of this compact he sufficiently proclaimed in a speech at the Jacobins. ‘Abroad,’ he said, ‘the tyrants of the earth encompass you; within, the friends of tyranny conspire against you, and they will do so until hope be severed from crime. The foreign and domestic foes of the Republic must be alike subdued, or we perish in its ruins. Now, in this predicament, the paramount maxim of policy teaches that the people are to be ruled according to the dictates of reason, and their enemies coerced by terror. If during peace the spring of popular government be virtue, during a period of revolution it is at once virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is detrimental; terror, without which virtue is impotent. Conquer, then, by terror the enemies of liberty, and you will have reason as the basis of the Republic. The government of a revolution is the despotism of liberty against tyranny. The factions against which we have to contend march under different banners, but they conspire to the same end—the disorganisation of the popular government, the ruin of the Convention, and the triumph of tyranny. One of these two factions would drive us to weakness, the other to excesses.’

He thus indicated with sufficient clearness the policy that was to be followed by the government. Each of the denounced parties took the alarm, and prepared, according to their several means, to parry the threatened blow. In physical force the Moderates were powerless, and their only hope consisted either in rousing the bulk of the Convention to vindicate its independence, and throw off the yoke of the decemvirs, or in propitiating the despot of the hour, and bespeaking his mercy. The first alternative was tried, but the craven *Belly* was not to be stirred from its ignominious slavery. The second alone remained, and Danton, with some of his friends, sought an interview with Robespierre. The latter received them with a cold reserve. Danton, yielding to the impetuosity of his

character, opened the conference with bitter complaints of the feelings that had been manifested towards him. 'I know,' said he emphatically, 'the hatred that is borne me by the Committee, but I do not fear it.' 'You are wrong,' Robespierre replied; 'no bad intentions exist towards you; but it is well to be explicit.' 'Explicit! explicit!' Danton exclaimed; 'for that good faith is necessary.' Observing Robespierre frown gloomily at these words, he added, 'Undoubtedly the Royalists must be repressed, but only blows useful to the Republic need be struck, and the innocent ought not to be confounded with the guilty.' 'And pray who has told you,' Robespierre retorted with a bitter sneer, 'that one innocent has perished?' Turning to the friends who accompanied him, and lifting his eyes in amazement, Danton cried, 'What say you? Not one innocent has perished!' After this exordium, the interview could scarcely end satisfactorily. Robespierre confessed the friendship he had entertained for Danton, but he could not allow his affections to prevail against the good of the commonwealth: his whole life had been a continual sacrifice of those affections to his country, and if his friend were guilty, he must undergo the penalty of crime; but it was to be remembered that justice would always shield innocence. With this somewhat doubtful assurance Danton was fain to rest contented, and the interview terminated in a decisive estrangement.

On their part, the Anarchists were determined to make a struggle to save themselves. Taking advantage of the temporary illness of Couthon and Robespierre, and the absence of Billaud-Varennes, they attempted to organise a movement. On the 15th Ventose (5th March) 1794, placards were posted up throughout Paris denouncing the Convention as the cause of all the sufferings of the people, and as still imbued with the fatal spirit of the Girondins; urging that it should be dissolved, a new executive power formed, and a chief appointed to insure the salvation of the country. The section of Marat assembled under the presidency of Momoro, and throwing a veil over the declaration of rights, declared itself in insurrection until liberty and provisions were secured to the people, and their enemies punished. The scheme of a slaughter in the prisons was openly mooted at this meeting, and Ronsin, who, with Vincent, had been liberated from custody, visited all the prisons with his staff of the revolutionary army, inspected the registers, and made lists of those who were incarcerated on account of ultra-revolutionary opinions to be saved from the intended massacre. The Cordeliers met on the evening of the same day, and in imitation of the section of Marat, threw a veil over the declaration of rights, and proclaimed the country in danger. On the following day, the 16th Ventose, deputations of the insurgent section and club waited on the Commune to obtain its adherence; but that body, with its chiefs, Pache and Chau-

mette, shrank in pusillanimity from the enterprise, and refused to incur the danger of countenancing it. The people, too, were sluggish, and no movement took place in any of the other sections. The Cordeliers themselves were reclaimed from their aberration by a speech of Collot d'Herbois, and the conspirators remained totally without support. The Committee lost no time in ordering the arrest of the criminals; and on the night of the 23d Ventose, Hebert, Vincent, Ronsin, Momoro, and others, were apprehended and lodged in the Luxembourg. Although Chaumette had made a very abject recantation of his errors, he, too, was apprehended, together with Gobel, the abjuring bishop of Paris, and Anacharsis Clootz, the apostle of Atheism. Fouquier-Tinville was directed to prepare the act of accusation against them; and in his discretion divided them into two classifications, one embracing Anarchists and foreign agents, the other including the principal movers against religion. The first only were immediately arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and they formed a sufficiently heterogeneous compound, being fifteen in number, and comprising, with Hebert and his associates, Proly, Dubuisson, Pereyra, Desfiens, and Clootz. Of the whole number, Ronsin and Clootz alone evinced intrepidity and fortitude. Vincent and Hebert were completely prostrated. Although the charges against them were of the usual vague description, and supported by most loose and irrelevant testimony, the jury found no difficulty in convicting them, and they were all sentenced to undergo the penalty of death. They were led to execution on the morning of the 4th Germinal (24th March), followed by an immense crowd, who hooted and yelled with all the fickleness of an insensate multitude, and directed against Hebert in particular taunting and insulting shouts. 'He's in a devil of a rage the Father Duchesne!' the people shouted, repeating his own expression towards men whom he had reviled. At the last moment, Clootz proclaimed his unalterable constancy in the belief of Atheism, and died with extraordinary firmness. Hebert and Vincent were so utterly overcome, that they had to be carried on the scaffold and deposited beneath the axe of the guillotine.

But a short interval was allowed to elapse between the destruction of the Anarchists and the arrest of the Moderates. Profound dissimulation and secrecy, nevertheless, were observed during the interval; and it was with a feeling of astonishment, mingled with consternation, that Paris learnt on the morning of the 11th Germinal (31st March) the apprehension of Danton, Camille-Desmoulins, Lacroix, Phillippeaux, and Herault de Séchelles during the night. At its sitting, the Convention manifested an uneasiness that was not to be mistaken. Legendre even had the boldness to claim for Danton the right of being heard at the bar. 'The man,' said he, 'who in September '92 saved France by his energy,

deserves to be heard, and ought to be allowed to vindicate himself when he is accused of betraying his country.' It required all the authority of Robespierre to suppress the rising tendency to resistance, and in a short but emphatic oration, he reduced the trembling representatives to their accustomed acquiescence. Nevertheless, Danton had been warned of the fate awaiting him; and having no resource but flight, he refused to avail himself of it. Whither, indeed, could he fly? In no part of France would he have been safe, and he might well fear an indifferent reception from foreign despots, after the treatment to which they had subjected the illustrious Lafayette. To some of his friends, who exhorted him either to take measures of defence or to seek an asylum, he replied, 'I would rather be guillotined than guillotine others; besides, my life is not worth preserving, and I am weary of existence. You talk of exile, but can a man carry his country in the sole of his shoe?' Still he had flattered himself that the Committee would not venture upon so daring a step as his arrest. 'I am aware,' he said, 'that they wish to arrest me, but they dare not;' and he repeated this phrase several times, 'they dare not! they dare not!' After his arrival at the Luxembourg, Lacroix said to him, 'It is monstrous to think we should be arrested. Who could have conceived it possible?' 'Possible!' Danton replied, 'I knew it all along; I was apprised of it.' 'Sure of it, and not act!' Lacroix exclaimed; 'this is according to your usual indolence, and it has undone us.' 'In truth I did not believe,' Danton observed in reply, 'that they would have ever had courage to execute their design.'

In the case of such important personages, it was deemed requisite that the Convention should by an express decree consign them to the Revolutionary Tribunal; and consequently St Just presented a report detailing their manifold iniquities. In this extraordinary paper, marked by all the gloomy fanaticism and rigour of his character, he represented Danton as the inviolable enemy of the Revolution—as the accomplice and tool of all the factions which had sought to subvert it—as a spy in the pay of Mirabeau and the court—and as the secret ally of Royalists, Girondins, and Anarchists. Such incompatible imputations and contradictory charges were blended together with marvellous art and malevolent ingenuity, and the Convention found them sufficiently conclusive to order, by a unanimous vote, and even amidst acclamations, the impeachment of Danton and his companions. They were accordingly placed before the Revolutionary Tribunal on the 13th Germinal. Beside them, and included in the same multifarious indictment, were ranged Chabot, Bazire, Delaunay, and Fabre d'Eglantine, whose specific crime was having forged a decree; the two brothers Frey, bankers; D'Espagnac, the Belgian contractor; Westermann, the Vendean general; and

two foreigners, Guzman, a Spaniard, and Diederichs, a Dane. This singular admixture of forgers, bankers, and foreigners with the Moderates, was artfully intended to accredit the idea that the latter were tainted with all the evil influences of corruption and treachery. Upon being interrogated as to their names, ages, and places of abode, as usual, Danton replied, 'My name is Danton, sufficiently well known in the Revolution; I am thirty-five years old; my abode will soon be in nonentity, and my name will live in the Pantheon of history.' Camille-Desmoulins answered that he was thirty-three, 'the age of the sans-culotte Jesus Christ when he died.' Danton and his friends complained bitterly of being associated with persons with whom they had no connection, but their objections were disregarded. The president of the Tribunal addressed himself to Danton. 'Danton,' said he, 'the Convention accuses you of having conspired with Mirabeau, with Dumouriez, with D'Orleans, with the Girondins, with foreigners, and with the faction which seeks to reinstate Louis XVII.' The burly demagogue was roused to the fiercest indignation. Raising his stentorian voice to its highest pitch, he cried out, 'Let the cowards who accuse me show their faces, and I will cover them with infamy. Let the Committees come forward; I will answer only in their presence; I require them both as accusers and as witnesses. Let them appear, then, I say. At the same time, I care little for you and your judgment; I have already told you that I will soon be secure in nonentity: life is a burden to me, and I long to be delivered from it. Take it, therefore, and be accursed!' The president hinted to him that such audacity was rather the proof of guilt than of innocence. 'My audacity,' Danton retorted, 'has ever been exerted in the cause of liberty, and in such it is the most meritorious of virtues. Can I be expected to restrain myself when I am thus calumniated? I, such a revolutionist as I, accused of having conspired with Mirabeau, Dumouriez, and D'Orleans, of having licked the feet of despots! Ah, thou vile St Just, thou wilt have to answer to posterity for thy accusation against the firmest supporter of liberty!' Being again called to order by the president, who reminded him that even Marat had conducted himself respectfully towards the Tribunal, he became more calm, and entered into a long retrospect of his life, until, coming to the event of the 10th of August, when by the indictment he was accused of having concealed himself, he again burst forth into uncontrollable rage, and vociferated with such might, that his voice was heard from the hall across the Place de Grève, and over the waters of the Seine to the quay on the opposite side, where numerous persons were congregated. The president rang his bell with violence to drown it, but in vain. 'Do you not hear me?' he cried; 'be silent.' 'The voice of a man defending his honour and his life,' Danton replied, 'cannot be

stified by the clang of your bell.' He continued to shake the building with the echoes of his terrific voice until he was obliged to cease through sheer exhaustion.

It was evident that the spectacle of this lion at bay was making a dangerous impression on the auditory. Lacroix, Camille, and Phillippeaux likewise made energetic remonstrances against the charges they were called upon to answer, and added to the effect of Danton's undaunted defiance. Fouquier-Tinville was intimidated, and abruptly closing the first day's proceedings, hastened to the Committee of Public Safety to express his apprehensions that a conviction was almost impossible. Great agitation, in fact, prevailed amongst the people who had attended the trial both in and around the Palace of Justice; and there were threatening symptoms of a popular outbreak. In the prisons, too, and especially in the Luxembourg, an extraordinary ferment reigned, and there might be reason to apprehend a desperate attempt on the part of the inmates to break their bonds. A spy reported certain expressions of General Dillon, who was confined in the Luxembourg, uttered by him, it would appear, under the intoxication of wine, in which he talked of exciting an insurrection among the populace by a distribution of assignats to be made by means of Camille-Desmoulins' wife. This information was eagerly laid hold of to accelerate the termination of the trial. St Just appeared before the Convention, and represented to it that the accused were in open revolt against the Tribunal; that a rising was about to take place in the prisons; that Camille's wife had been furnished with money to stir up the people; and that General Dillon was to break out of the Luxembourg, and put himself at the head of the insurrection. At this intelligence the Convention affected a becoming horror, and immediately passed a decree, proposed by St Just, to the effect that the Tribunal should be authorised to condemn such of the accused as were wanting in respect to it, without hearing anything further in their behalf. Amar and Vadier, members of the Committee of General Security, hurried with this decree to the Palace of Justice, and delivered it exultingly into the hands of Fouquier-Tinville, who immediately communicated it to the court. Danton rose, bursting with indignation. 'I call this audience to witness,' he cried, 'that we have not insulted the Tribunal.' 'That is true!' resounded from different parts of the hall. Camille increased the excitement by exclaiming in accents of despair, 'The villains!—not content with murdering me, they are determined also to murder my wife!' Perceiving Amar and Vadier lurking at the extremity of the hall, Danton pointed with his finger at them, and cried out with vehemence, 'Look at those cowardly assassins; see how they prowl around us; they will not leave us so long as we are alive!' The judges were struck with affright, and hastily broke up the sitting.

The next day, being the third of the proceedings, the jury were entitled to declare themselves satisfied; and although no evidence whatever had been adduced, they availed themselves of the privilege, and demanded leave to retire to consider their verdict. Camille denounced them in furious terms as murderers, and refusing to quit the dock with the rest of the accused, was dragged from the railing by main force. The jury were not long in arriving at a decision, and returned into court with the anticipated verdict of guilty. To avoid the chance of any commotion, the prisoners were not called up to hear their sentence, but it was communicated to them in their cells by an usher. Upon hearing it, Danton observed, 'We are sacrificed to the ambition of a few dastardly brigands; but they will not long enjoy the fruit of their triumphant villany. I drag Robespierre after me—Robespierre follows me to the grave!' Now on the brink of death, this great revolutionist began to repent the course he had pursued. 'At last I perceive,' he said, 'that in revolutions power finally remains with the greatest miscreants.' His imagination, chastened by the sense of calamity, reverted to the days of his happy boyhood; and he spoke with tender animation of the charms of the country, of green fields, of trees and flowers. 'It is scarcely a year ago since I was the means of instituting the Revolutionary Tribunal,' he remarked with a sigh of regret; 'may God and man forgive me for what I did! My object was to prevent a second massacre in the prisons, not to let loose a scourge upon humanity.'

On the morning of the 16th Germinal (5th of April) the condemned were placed in the fatal cart, to be carried to the place of execution. A numerous escort of soldiers surrounded them, and an immense multitude thronged the streets. Camille-Desmoulins seemed at first, as it were, stunned, and unable to comprehend how he came to be in such a predicament. 'This, then,' he exclaimed, 'is the recompense awarded to the first apostle of liberty!' He was speedily roused, however, from lethargy by the insulting clamours of the rabble, which exasperated him to an unseemly wrath. He retorted the vile abuse with violent exclamations, and in his anger tore his shirt. Danton, casting a calm and contemptuous look on the mob, observed to him, 'Compose thyself; take no notice of the wretched crew.' At the foot of the scaffold he gave way to a momentary emotion, and cried out, 'Oh my beloved! oh my dear wife! I shall never see thee again!' Checking himself immediately, he struck his breast and exclaimed, 'Come, Danton, no weakness!' He resumed his firm and undaunted demeanour, and, like all the rest of his companions, received death with that remarkable stoicism which was the characteristic of this bloody era.

To complete the destruction of the Hebertists and Dantonists

at one final swoop, the remnants of them were collected, and included, to the number of twenty-five, in one of the incongruous indictments which Fouquier-Tinville evinced such singular aptitude in fabricating. These comprehended Bishop Gobel, Chaumette, Dillon, and the widows of Desmoulins and Hebert. The principal charge against them was founded on the pretended outbreak of the prisoners in the Luxembourg, and although not a shadow of proof could be adduced tending to criminate any but General Dillon, and him only upon the valueless deposition of a spy, they were all condemned. Camille's widow was a young and beautiful woman, who had been tenderly attached to her husband, and she yielded up her life with a species of alacrity, rejoicing in the idea of rejoining him in another world. Gobel and Chaumette* betrayed the terror that weighed on their recreant souls, and were launched into eternity in a state of insensibility. Hebert's wife confronted death with greater fortitude than her craven and infamous husband, for she seemed a woman of superior mind than befitted the consort of so revolting a miscreant. They were executed on the 29th Germinal (18th of April).

The fall of Danton, unpitied and uncared of the inconstant multitude, affords a lesson pregnant with instruction touching the base and worthless nature of mere popular estimation. No man in the Revolution had done so much for the populace as Danton, none had risked his person more, or dyed his hands deeper in blood, to accelerate the reign of the sans-culottes; and yet, when their sway was at its summit, they quietly allowed this their great champion to be destroyed by an artful rival, and even pursued him to the scaffold with barbaric howls. Notwithstanding the crimes of which Danton was capable in the frenzy of excitement, he possessed generosity of character; and this virtue was sufficient to ruin him with a people whose passions could brook no check on their savage gratification. His death left Robespierre without a competitor in fame or influence on the arena of the Revolution. That successful aspirant had it now in his power to

* It is instructive to remark that the chief blusterers for the shedding of blood evinced, when their own turn came, the utmost abjectness of spirit. It was scarcely five months ago since this same Chaumette, in conjunction with Hebert, had harangued, with all the license of fancied security, in the Jacobin Club against prisoners before the Tribunal being allowed the benefit of counsel. On the 6th Brumaire (27th October), whilst the trial of the Girondins was pending, Hebert had made a motion calling for their condemnation within twenty-four hours, to which Chaumette thus spoke: 'Kings are not alone great criminals; the federalists are equally bad. I move that any man who shall undertake to defend a conspirator be forthwith marked as a bad citizen. The conspirator, the federalist, ought not to find protectors or defenders among republicans. . . . I move that they be devoted to ignominy and execration who shall defend the assassins of the people, and that this resolution be sent to the criminal tribunals, the forty-eight sections, and the popular societies.' This proposition of Chaumette's was adopted, and he lived to reap the benefit of it.

give practical efficacy to those fine and noble sentiments with which his orations were replete, and which he so perpetually invoked in strains of studied eloquence. Virtue, justice, humanity, magnanimity, were ever on his lips; and it remained to be seen whether they were with him genuine emotions or mere empty sounds, vaunted to conceal the corruption of a heart black with malignity and remorseless cruelty. The first steps of him and the Committee, after being freed from the opposing parties, were directed to concentrate the government still more completely in their own hands. They disbanded the revolutionary army, which was filled with men of the Anarchical faction; they annulled all the ministries, and divided the departments of the administration into committees, subject to the immediate superintendence of the Committee of Public Safety; they abolished the revolutionary and sectional committees throughout France, and instituted in their stead district boards of police under the direct control of the government; finally, they suppressed all the clubs save that of the Jacobins, which was further purified by expulsions, and rendered the sole centre, so to speak, of opinion. The most perfect submission attended all their measures. Addresses of adherence poured in from all quarters, expressing, in grotesque and hyperbolical phraseology, approbation of the firmness and patriotism of the Convention, under whose mask the Committee ruled. In these manifestations the Commune and sections of Paris, hitherto so turbulent and grasping, took the lead; and, so excessive is the reaction in popular bodies, returned humble thanks for being shorn of the power they had abused, and for being relieved from wicked agitators who had misled them. Thus all opposition being crushed, enjoying the plenitude of omnipotence for good or evil, Robespierre undertook to supply what was now wanting to France—namely, a religion. The Christian faith had been abjured, and abolished as the work of priestcraft and superstition. The worship of Reason had been substituted in its stead, but that in its turn had been indignantly superseded. Some religious creed was essential to the community, for none has ever existed totally devoid of belief in a supernatural providence; and, moreover, festivals on holidays were required to replace those of the Catholic calendar. Robespierre had an ardent admiration of Rousseau, whose principles, as enunciated in his ‘Social Contract,’ he affected to take as the guide of his own conduct. Hence the favourite idea of that eccentric and morbid philosopher, animated doubtless in the main with sublime inspirations, touching the all-sufficiency of credence in a Supreme Being and in the moral virtues, naturally occurred to him now as the one to be embraced and enforced in a society emancipated from all previous dogmas. Accordingly, on the 18th Floreal (7th May), he appeared in the tribune of the Convention, and delivered an elaborate oration

which he had prepared with the greatest care. He commenced by developing what he esteemed to be the Republican system, which he identified with virtue, contending that the various adversaries it had encountered were but the impersonations of vice in different forms, nourished and stimulated by the machinations of despots. Pitt was the great original of evil; all the factions that had successively polluted the pure stream of the Revolution were his puppets; all the treacheries and extravagances they had committed were owing to him, the inexorable enemy of virtue. In the article of religion, especially, he had bent all his efforts to disgrace the French nation enfranchised from bondage, and had pointed with exultation to the deplorable aberrations into which it had been betrayed, saying to his slaves, 'Behold those Republicans! are they not worse than we?' After this exordium, he proceeded to unfold his views upon the question of religion. 'The idea of a Supreme Being,' he said, 'and the immortality of the soul, is a continual invocation to justice: it is therefore a social and Republican principle. By what authority shall man say that the Deity does not exist? Oh ye who profess attachment to this sterile doctrine, and who had never any towards your country, what advantage do you expect from seeking to persuade men that a blind fatality presides over their destinies, and strikes at random guilt and innocence—that the soul is but a breath extinguished at the portal of the tomb? Will the idea of annihilation inspire purer and more exalted sentiments than that of immortality? Will it awaken in man more respect for his fellow-creatures and for himself, more devotedness to his country, more courage to resist tyranny, greater contempt for sensual gratifications and death? You who mourn the bereavement of a beloved friend, who loved to think that his noblest part survives dissolution; you who weep over the remains of a child or of a wife, are ye consoled by him who tells you that nothing but vile dust is left to either? You, unfortunate mortals, who fall beneath the stab of the assassin, is not your last sigh an appeal to the justice of the Eternal? Innocence on the scaffold makes the tyrant turn pale in his car of triumph. Would it possess such ascendancy if the grave levelled alike the oppressor and the oppressed?'

Robespierre next adverted to the examples of history, and showed that the greatest characters of antiquity had all supported the doctrine of a future life. He then reviewed the writings of the encyclopedists,* whom he denounced as the first propounders of Atheism, and the disorganisers of the social virtues. 'They declaimed against despotism,' he said, 'and received the pensions of despots; they composed alternately tirades against the iniquities of courts, dedications to kings and madrigals for

* These are the writers mentioned in pp. 13, 14, vol. i. of this work.

their mistresses; they were proud and blustering in their works, meek and cringing in the antechambers of the great. This sect propagated with untiring zeal the principles of materialism, which proselytised so readily the society of the rich, the noble, and the intellectual; to it we owe that selfish philosophy which reduced egotism to a system, and regarded human nature as a warfare of intrigue and cunning, in which success was the sole measure of right and wrong; integrity a matter of taste or good-breeding, and the world as the domain of the most dexterous of scoundrels.

He paused to except Rousseau from the sweeping anathema, and to pronounce upon him a glowing eulogium. In conclusion, he was intent to show that in vindicating the claims of religion, he had no wish to resuscitate the extinct order of priests. 'What is there in common,' he asked, 'between priests and God? Priests are to mortality what quacks are to medicine. How different is the god of nature from the god of the priests! I can imagine nothing of closer affinity to Atheism than the religions which they have devised. By grossly misrepresenting the Supreme Being, they have destroyed belief in him as far as lay in their power. They have created a god after their own image; they have made him jealous, capricious, cruel, covetous, and implacable; they have treated him as the Mayors of the Palace formerly treated the descendants of Clovis, in order to reign in his name, and to put themselves in his place. They have confined him in heaven as in a palace, and have called him to earth only to demand of him, for their own benefit, tithes, wealth, honours, pleasures, and power. The real temple of the Supreme Being is the universe; his worship, virtue; his festivals, the joy of a great nation assembled in his presence to cement the bonds of universal brotherhood, and render to him the homage of grateful and intelligent hearts.' Festivals he held to be essential as observances of a religious character; for, as he said, 'since man is the greatest object that exists in nature, so the most magnificent and exalting of all sights is that of a great people assembled in vast congregations.' Consequently he proposed that such festivals should be held on each of the decades, in addition to those appointed for the commemoration of the principal eras of the Revolution, such as the 14th of July, the 10th of August, the 21st of January, and the 31st of May. He terminated his discourse amidst long-continued applause, and in the terms of his motion it was unanimously decreed—first, that the French nation acknowledges the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul; secondly, that it acknowledges the worship most worthy the Supreme Being to be the practice of the social duties. A day was set apart, the 20th Prairial (8th June), for the solemn inauguration of the new creed, the details of which were intrusted to David, the celebrated painter.

This decree met with an enthusiastic reception from all parts of the community, if the laudatory addresses presented to the Convention afford a just criterion of the general feeling. The Jacobins appeared at the bar in a numerous deputation, and were complimented by the president in magniloquent terms upon the beneficial influence they exercised over opinion; and it was decreed, amidst universal acclamations, that ever since the commencement of the Revolution, the club of Jacobins, whose fame extended to the farthest corner of the earth, had not ceased to deserve well of the country. The section of Marat, the last stronghold of the Anarchists, exceeded the rest in the extravagance of its language. 'Oh, beneficent Mountain!' it said; 'oh, protecting Sion! accept our expressions of gratitude and congratulation for all the sublime decrees which thou art daily issuing for the happiness of mankind. From thy bosom hath darted the salutary thunderbolt which, crushing Atheism, gives us genuine Republicans the consolatory assurance of living free in the sight of the Supreme Being, and in expectation of the immortality of the soul.'

Whilst thus wrapt apparently in the fervour of devotion towards all that is great and noble in humanity, the Committee of Public Safety abandoned itself to a career of bloodshed more systematical and ferocious than had yet characterised the Revolution. Robespierre, St Just, and Couthon, formed the triumvirate which overruled the Committee, and stamped on its proceedings the impress of their own passions. St Just was a fanatic of that sombre temperament which, firm in its convictions, hesitates not at any sacrifice to realise them. Young—for he was only twenty-five years old—he had already the stern and gloomy aspect of a Cenobite, his features being formed on the severest model, his hair long and lank, his eye fixed and penetrating: he gave at once the idea of a man of the strongest determination, and of the most inexorable severity. His industry was indefatigable, and he delighted in action, differing therein from Robespierre, who revelled rather in the triumphs of the Tribune: whether in camp with the armies, or in conclave with his colleagues, his mind was ever on fire to impart decision and energy to those with whom he acted; and to him perhaps, more than to Robespierre, was owing the cruelty and implacability which became henceforth the ruling principle of the government. Couthon in appearance was the very reverse of St Just. His countenance was mild and pleasing, and his voice possessed a singular melodiousness; the under part of his body was paralysed, and he was incapable of self-motion; yet he was animated with a fanaticism as inflexible and pitiless as that of St Just himself. He possessed a flowing and persuasive style of oratory, and when the Convention or the Committee was to be cajoled, Couthon was the one

selected as fittest for the task; whereas when intimidation was needed, St Just was the more appropriate instrument; and in cases of extreme emergency, Robespierre crushed opposition by that tone of audacity and superiority which he had now attained, and which had been wrought in him, together with the development of undoubted talents, by his success in the Revolution.

The revolutionary committees, which had hitherto mainly tended to fill the prisons by arrests, being abolished, they were replaced by a police, at the head of which was appointed a man called Heron, who employed an immense number of subordinate agents and spies, who frequented the theatres and all public places, entrapping victims by the most odious devices. Such terror was excited by this legion of myrmidons, that men feared to speak to their nearest friends or even relatives; and in the gayest scenes, they avoided each other as if they dreaded the contamination of the plague. With such a moral pestilence abroad, people kept their houses, and social intercourse almost entirely ceased. Such, however, was the effect of this system, that in a short time nearly 8000 persons were confined in the prisons of Paris alone; in the whole of France, the number has been estimated at nearly 200,000. This great increase of arrests was owing principally to fresh decrees against ex-nobles and their families, priests, and foreigners, who were declared out of the pale of the law if found within the Republic after a lapse of ten days. 'We must,' Collot d'Herbois exclaimed in the Jacobin Club, 'make the body politic throw out the foul sweat of aristocracy. The more copiously it perspires, the more healthy it will become.' An additional impetus was given to the operation of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and from twenty to thirty executions took place daily. The judges and jurymen were oppressed with the weight of the business they had to transact, inasmuch as some forms were still observed in the trial of prisoners. Consequently the Tribunal was divided into four sections, and the number of judges and jurymen augmented, in order that greater despatch might be obtained in condemnations. 'All procrastination,' said Couthon in a report to the Convention, 'is a crime; all indulgent formality is a public danger; the only delay allowable in punishing the enemies of the country is the time taken in identifying them.' Hence no advocates or pleadings were permitted in behalf of the accused, it being proclaimed as a maxim that 'the law gives to calumniated patriots patriotic jurymen for their advocates, but it grants none to conspirators.' Moreover, fresh powers were conferred on the tribunals to judge collectively, and involve in one sentence whole panels of prisoners, all crimes being merged in the one of *enmity to the people*, and all being adjudged as enemies of the people who had sought to *destroy liberty either by force or by artifice*, in the latter category

being included the most trivial transgressors, even to the circulators of bad news. In the consideration of their verdicts, the jurymen were relieved from any other obligation than that derivable from their own consciences. By these various means of acceleration, the number of executions was gradually increased, until it reached sixty, seventy, eighty a day, and the horrors of the Revolution may be said to have reached their climax.

The state of the prisons and of their inmates was such as words can but feebly portray. At every hour of the night the heavy gates were opened to give admission to fresh victims, and every morning the carts came round to carry away those appointed to appear before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Their names were called over in the courts and corridors of the jails, and every one trembled with agony lest his own should be on the fatal list. The keepers of the prisons took a fiendish delight in aggravating the alarms of these visitations, and often called out names which were not on the list, simply to enjoy the consternation they thus produced. The reality, in sooth, was sufficiently appalling; and in reading the details of these harrowing scenes left by survivors, the eye grows dim and the mind shudders at the extent of woe and suffering they reveal. Never, assuredly, did the proscriptions or barbarities of Roman emperors equal in extent or atrocity the deeds committed by these vampire regenerators of mankind, these unholy propagandists of the sublime doctrines of virtue and morality!

In all ages and conditions of society tyranny has armed the hand of the assassin. Some imagination broods in secret over the calamities of the time, until it is stimulated to avenge them. Moreover, to rid the world of a tyrant has ever been held a warrant to the gratitude and admiration of mankind. It would have been strange if at such a dismal era as this some attempt of the sort had not been made. A man called Ladmiral, who had been a domestic in distinguished families, undertook the task of smiting at least one of the decemvirs, and he had wavered between Collot d'Herbois and Robespierre. He had at length resolved to kill the latter, and on the 3d Floreal (22d April), he lay in wait for him in the precincts of the Committee of Public Safety; but failing to encounter him, he planted himself at night upon a common stair up which both he and Collot d'Herbois lived, and as the latter ascended the steps, he discharged a pistol at him, which, however, missed fire. It was only upon the third attempt that the weapon went off, and then the contents lodged in the wall. Collot immediately gave the alarm, and Ladmiral, after some resistance, was secured. On being interrogated by Fouquier-Tinville, he confessed it was his purpose to have assassinated Robespierre, which, so far from considering a crime, he deemed the most meritorious act he could perform, and affirmed that he had no accomplices or insti-

gators in the attempt. On the following day, a young female, by name Cecile Renault, called at the house in which Robespierre resided, and her manner having excited suspicion, she was taken into custody. On being searched, she was found to have a bundle containing clothes and two knives. Being questioned as to her intentions, she replied that she had wished to speak with Robespierre. 'Upon what subject?' she was asked. 'That depends upon how I found him,' she answered. 'Are you acquainted with the Citizen Robespierre?' 'No; I sought to know him, for I wished to see how a tyrant looked.' 'What use did you propose to make of your two knives?' 'None, having no intention to do injury to any one.' No further disclosures could be extracted from her; but her design to assassinate Robespierre was held to be sufficiently proved, and she, together with every member of her family, amounting in the whole to sixty persons, suffered death for the attempt. They were conducted to the guillotine in red shirts, as indicating the bloody nature of their imputed crime.

These events naturally created great excitement, and Barrère presented a special report on the subject to the Convention, in which he charged the usual scape-goat of all offences, Pitt, as the author of the attempted assassinations. A ready credence was affected to be given to this stale absurdity, and the British minister was once more loaded with the imprecations of the Jacobins, as designing to rob them of their hero and idol. The interest manifested in behalf of the preserved patriots was extreme. At the Jacobin Club they were received almost with divine honours. 'Behold these invaluable men!' the president exclaimed, pointing to them; 'the God of free men has saved them! He has thrown his shield over them, and has preserved them for the Republic.' It was moved that guards should be assigned to the members of the Committee, to protect their precious lives, and the proposal was received with unanimous applause. Robespierre, however, repudiated the proposition, as insidiously made to bring discredit on the Committee, and his disapproval caused its immediate withdrawal. He delivered a speech, in which he stated he knew all the dangers he incurred by combating tyranny; that he was aware the dagger of the assassin would be whetted against him, but he was not to be intimidated; and that, reposing as he did on the belief in virtue and Providence, he was indifferent to the attacks of enemies, since he was always prepared to die for the benefit of his country. Rapturous acclamations greeted his words, and on this occasion he enjoyed a triumph infinitely gratifying to him; for with all his ambition, the vanity of self-importance most inflated him, and had the ascendancy in his heart.

An abortive blow aimed at the life or power of a ruler inevitably tends to consolidate his sway, and render his government more severe. So in this instance the reign of the trinnivirs seemed

affirmed on a yet stronger basis, and multiplied executions testified to the relentless fury of the vengeance evoked. Nothing could appear more secure on the 20th Prairial (8th June), the day on which Robespierre reached the summit of his grandeur. It had been appointed for the solemn inauguration of the worship of the Supreme Being, and Robespierre was nominated president of the Convention, to enact the leading part in the august ceremony. A brilliant sun shone on the auspicious morning, and Robespierre appeared wreathed in unwonted smiles. He had dressed himself with extraordinary care: in his hat he wore a plume of feathers, and in his hand he carried, like the other representatives, a bunch of flowers, fruit, and ears of corn. The Convention assembled beneath the awning of an amphitheatre erected in the garden of the Tuileries. On each side, and around, were ranged groups of boys, young men, veterans, and females, adorned with sprigs of violet, myrtle, oak, and ivy. In the centre of the ground were figures representing Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness. The ceremonies commenced with the strains of sacred music from a numerous orchestra. After they had ceased, the president of the Convention arose, and from an elevated position delivered an oration. 'Republican Frenchmen!' he said, 'the ever-fortunate day dedicated to the honour of the Supreme Being is at length arrived. Never did the world which he has created exhibit a spectacle so worthy of applause. God has beheld tyranny, crime, and imposture reigning on the earth; at this moment he beholds a whole nation, assailed by all the oppressors of mankind, suspending the course of its heroic labours to lift its thoughts and its prayers towards Him who has given it the mission to undertake, and the courage to execute them!.... God has not created kings to devour the human race; he has not created priests to harness them like beasts of the field to the chariots of kings, and to exhibit to the world examples of perfidy, avarice, and baseness; but he has created the universe to attest his power, and man to aid him in the glorious undertaking to love his fellows, and arrive at happiness by the path of virtue.... The Author of nature, in engraving with his immortal hand on the heart of man the code of justice and equality, has traced the sentence of death against tyrants. He has bound together all mortals by the chain of love: perish the tyrants who would venture to break it!' After pronouncing this discourse, which, as usual with him, was a masterpiece of eloquence and admirable sentiments, he descended from the amphitheatre, and taking a torch, set fire to the figures of Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness, from whose ashes arose an effigy of Wisdom, which was observed as an evil omen to be blackened with smoke. A procession was then formed to proceed to the Champ de Mars, Robespierre leading the way, and walking some paces in advance of the Convention, his countenance beaming with satisfaction, and

an object to the crowd of exclusive attention. His vainglorious demeanour, and the honours paid him, provoked the envy and sarcasms of his colleagues, one of whom exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by him, 'the Tarpeian rock is close to the Capitol!' On the Champ de Mars a huge altar was erected, overshadowed by an immense tree, beneath the branches of which the Convention clustered. Martial symphonies were played, and animating stanzas sung; the men drew their swords, and swore to conquer the enemies of their country, or die, and then all raised their hands to heaven in homage of the Supreme Being. The day was closed with public games and diversions.

The murmurs that had attended Robespierre in his triumphal march to the Champ de Mars were indicative of the storm about to burst on his head. He himself had become so inflated with pride and vanity, that he assumed too palpably the airs of an absolute dictator. He scarcely deigned to consult even the members of the sovereign Committee, and propounded to them measures, which he insisted upon being adopted without discussion. Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, and Barrère, revolted against this assumption of supremacy, and speedily an open rupture took place between them and Robespierre, St Just, and Couthon. The Convention itself began to manifest symptoms of resistance. On the 22d Prairial, only two days after the ceremony in honour of the Supreme Being, a proposal of Robespierre to extend the powers of the Committees and the Revolutionary Tribunal, so that members of the Convention might be arrested and tried without a previous decree, excited a warm opposition, and was carried only with considerable difficulty. This law of the 22d Prairial loosened the Tribunal from every remaining restraint on the rapid condemnation of prisoners, and Fouquier-Tinville availed himself of it to despatch them in batches of sixty at a time. This extraordinary personage had grown frantic with a thirst for blood. 'The business prospers,' he said with glee; 'heads fall like tiles, but it must go still better next decade; I must have four hundred and fifty at least.' He caused a guillotine to be erected in the hall of the Tribunal itself, and made preparations for having one hundred and sixty persons condemned in one aggregate. These were implicated, as pretended, in Dillon's conspiracy to break out of the Luxembourg, and the spies planted in the prisons had drawn up the list. His intention, however, aroused the anger of the Committee, and it ordered him imperatively to divide them into three parties, and to remove the guillotine from the hall of the Tribunal. 'Wretch!' Collot d'Herbois said to him with great indignation, 'wouldst thou demoralise death itself?' No effectual check, however, was placed on the proceedings of this sanguinary monster, and he continued to empty the jails with frightful rapidity. All classes of the community were included in the indiscriminate proscription;

and in the lists of the victims sentenced by the Revolutionary Tribunal at this period are enumerated persons of every rank in life, artisans, labourers, peasants, sempstresses, washerwomen, shopkeepers, merchants, priests, nobles, and princesses. Of the latter, the Princess Elizabeth, sister of Louis XVI., was the most illustrious. She and the young Princess of Monaco perished within a few hours of each other, associated with a great number of persons they knew nothing about. Madame Elizabeth evinced all the fortitude and piety in her last moments for which she was so distinguished. From the 22d Prairial (10th June) to the 9th Thermidor (27th July), 1285 individuals were condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal, and executed on the Place de la Révolution.

At first, while there was yet some novelty in these immolations, the people were accustomed to take delight in the spectacles of blood; and their feelings were so hardened, that even among females many frequented the place of execution with their sewing and knitting, earning thereby the title of 'harpies of the guillotine.' But now their frequency began to pall the taste of even the most ferocious, and the windows were closed and the streets deserted on the line followed by the carts. A reaction was decidedly commencing, which gave boldness to the members of the Convention. They were, moreover, actuated by fears for their own safety, since the recent symptoms of opposition, slight as they were, had roused the wrath of Robespierre, and it was known that he contemplated a fresh sacrifice of representatives. Douthon scarcely disguised the design, although, to allay alarm, he stated at the Jacobins that the enemies of the people who still infected the national legislature amounted only to five or six, by the destruction of whom the faction of traitors would be at length exterminated. But in the uncertainty prevailing as to who were intended to be struck, the apprehension was general, and extended to the members of the Committee of General Security. These combined with Collot, Billaud, and Barrère of the sovereign committee, who aspired to usurp the reins of power by the downfall of Robespierre, and a first assault was agreed upon. A peculiar circumstance occurred facilitating a blow at Robespierre, which it was difficult for him to parry. An old woman named Catherine Theot, who had lost her reason, it is said, in the Bastille, had a short time previously proclaimed herself the mother of God, and announced a speedy coming of a Messiah. She gained numerous proselytes, and among the rest one Dom-Gerle, formerly a member of the Constituent Assembly. They held meetings at the woman Theot's house, and practised certain mystic rites, in which Dom-Gerle officiated as the prophet of the sect. Theot declared Robespierre to be likewise a prophet, and exalted him to the rank of her son; so that by the followers of the superstition he came to be regarded as a supernatural being.

All this was known to Robespierre, and as it flattered his vanity he was content in some measure to countenance these votaries. Dom-Gerle often visited him, and he had given him a certificate of civism under his own hand. Through this sect it was determined to assail the mighty dictator; for by exposing him to ridicule, a step was made towards his dethronement. Amar, Vadier, and Vouland, of the Committee of General Security, planned the apprehension of the enthusiasts in the midst of their orgies, and discovered a letter written by the woman Theot to Robespierre, in which she styled him her 'beloved son and chief prophet.' On learning their arrest, Robespierre immediately proceeded to the Committee of Public Safety and demanded that they should be liberated. Collot and his colleagues, on the contrary, insisted that they should be prosecuted; and a vehement altercation ensued, from which Robespierre, unable to carry his point, retired weeping with rage. He now began to perceive how far his influence was to be henceforth contested in the Committee, and he attached himself exclusively to the Jacobins, designing through them to accomplish the destruction of his opponents. He sent messengers forthwith to St Just, who was absent on the northern frontier, summoning him to his aid. In the spirit of petty spitefulness he abstained from attending the sittings of the Committee, thus imprudently abandoning the focus of government to his adversaries. But he possessed powerful means of offence in the vast organisation of the Jacobins, in the Commune, in the Revolutionary Tribunal, in the remains of the revolutionary army, and in the commander of the National Guard, Henriot, who tendered him his services. The scheme of another 2d of June was openly discussed among his adherents, and he was strongly urged to take decisive measures. Had he done so, there can be little doubt he must have succeeded, for his opponents were far from being agreed as to the precise course of hostilities they should pursue. They were in the position of men acting in concert rather through the influence of fear than from any strong bond of cohesion; and in any decisive emergency they could by no means calculate upon the firmness of the Convention, in which lay their principal support. But Robespierre, from natural timidity, and from his predilection for speech-making, shrank, as he had done throughout the Revolution, from active measures, and wasted the precious time in ambiguous harangues at the Jacobins, in which he scattered opprobrium profusely on the enemies of virtue and the people, without exactly indicating who they were. Meanwhile the opposite faction took counsel together, and made preparations for the coming conflict. The Committee of Public Safety, in spite of Couthon, who continued to attend its sittings, ordered the removal from Paris of the forty-eight artillery companies belonging

to the sections, which had always been notorious for their ultra-revolutionary tendencies. Meetings were held among the bolder and more compromised deputies, who were for the most part distinguished by a guilty participation in the worst atrocities of the Revolution, as Tallien (proconsul at Bordeaux), Fouché (the colleague of Clouthon at Lyons), Bourdon, Barras, Thuriot, Fréron, Dubois-Crancé, and others, who consulted with the members of the Committees without any actual plan of operations being arranged. Whilst the two parties were thus planted in antagonism, regarding each other with mutual jealousy and apprehension, St Just arrived, and undertook the part of a mediator. By his exertions a meeting of the two Committees of Public Safety and General Security was held, at which a species of reconciliation was effected, and a veil thrown over the dissensions that had existed. Barrère even presented a report to the Convention, in which he boasted of the perfect unanimity that prevailed among the members of the Committees, and thereby caused great consternation among the Conventionals, who had given umbrage to Robespierre, and who naturally supposed their sacrifice was to be the price of the accommodation. This apprehension was by no means unfounded, since Barrère and his colleagues were prompted to conciliate the powerful dictator by their reasonable dread of a decisive encounter with him; and if he had been content with the immolation of fifteen or twenty members of the Convention, all, in short, suspected to be in anyway connected with Danton, they would have been given up to him, and a hollow peace patched up for a time. But Robespierre was insatiable, and he insisted upon several of the more obnoxious members of the Committee of General Security being likewise abandoned to his vengeance, and this inexorable demand on his part occasioned a renewal of the rupture. He continued to absent himself from the Committee, and was more assiduous than ever in his attendance at the Jacobins.

Such was the relative situation of the parties in the beginning of Thermidor. It was clear that a collision must soon occur to terminate so precarious a state of affairs. The Committees were unwilling, however, to precipitate hostilities, and it was left for Robespierre to take the initiative. His principal partisans were eager for an immediate and direct assault upon the Convention, but he preferred a prior attempt at intimidation; and it was finally resolved to follow as nearly as possible the precedent of the 31st of May. The Jacobins were to present a petition, accompanied by a formidable display of physical force, and Robespierre was to support its prayer by an elaborate speech from the tribune. The professed aim of the movement was to obtain the renewal of the Committees, through which, if the Convention acceded to it, Robespierre would quietly secure the absolute dictatorship he

sought; if, on the contrary, it resisted, forcible means would be taken to compel its acquiescence, and the outrage of the 2d of June be re-enacted.

The petition of the Jacobins was presented on the 7th Thermidor (25th July), and Robespierre appeared in the tribune on the following day. He had prepared a speech with the greatest care and he proceeded to deliver it amidst a profound silence, which marked sufficiently the feeling of intense solicitude prevailing in the Convention. It was distinguished for all the usual characteristics of his studied orations. The objects of his vituperation were still the enemies of the people and of virtue, aiming at the establishment of tyranny by machinations and calumnies against the truly patriotic and immaculate, and particularly against himself, upon whom were unjustly charged all the horrible cruelties that had been recently perpetrated. He accused the Committee of being the chief instigators of all crimes and malversations, and identified himself, on the contrary, with the principles of order, justice, and clemency. He denounced the Committees, moreover, as holding the Convention in thralldom; and attempting with infinite tact to work upon the hopes and fears of that body, he thus summed up his laboured inculcation:—‘We say, then, that there exists a conspiracy against public liberty; that it owes its strength to a culpable coalition which intrigues in the very bosom of the Convention; that this coalition has accomplices in the Committee of General Security; that the enemies of the Republic have opposed this Committee to the Committee of Public Safety, and thus constituted two governments; that members of the Committee of Public Safety are engaged in this plot; that the coalition thus formed is seeking to ruin the patriots and the country. What is the remedy for this evil? To punish the traitors, supersede the members of the Committee of General Security, so purify that Committee, and make it subordinate to the Committee of Public Safety; purify the Committee of Public Safety itself; establish the unity of the government under the supreme authority of the Convention; and thus crush all the factions with the weight of the national authority, to rear on their ruins the reign of justice and liberty.’

He concluded amidst the same ominous silence that had attended the whole of his oration. For some moments after he had ceased to speak, a visible agitation perturbed the Convention, and all the symptoms of a fatal hesitation were displayed. At length a motion was made that the speech should be printed, and sent to all the communes and armies of the Republic. This motion gave rise to a debate, in which sundry acrimonious expressions were directed against Robespierre, but it was eventually carried after a speech from Barrère in its favour. Subsequently several members of the Committee of General Security demanded to be heard

in answer to Robespierre, and a scene of great confusion ensued, from the struggle to get possession of the tribune. Amar, Vadier, Lambon, Billaud-Varennés, and Panis, all spoke in their turns, and retorted the accusations of Robespierre by energetic denunciations against himself. This unexpected boldness completely disconcerted him; and after making an effort to reply, in which his voice was almost inarticulate from emotion, and was drowned by indignant shouts, he retired from the Assembly with grief and rage depicted on his countenance, repairing straightway to the Jacobin Club, to receive comfort and encouragement from his trusty partisans of that association. The resolution to print his speech was rescinded; but he read it from the tribune of the Jacobins, who applauded it with vociferous acclamations. Definitive war was thus declared between the parties, and each devoted the night to making preparations for the decisive conflict of the following day.

On the morning of the 9th—a date for ever famous in the annals of nations—the belligerents were early on the field of battle, at their respective posts in the Convention. All the surviving sections of that body—Girondins, Moderates, Dantonists, and Mountaineers—had united against the triumvirs, Robespierre,outhon, and St Just. In favour of these latter, however, were the Jacobins, assembled permanently in their hall, the Commune sitting in the Hôtel de Ville, and the Sections congregating under the leadership of Henriot. St Just opened the proceedings in the Convention by reading a report which he had drawn up during the night, and in which he recapitulated the arguments and statements of Robespierre. Tallien, who took the lead on this memorable occasion, interrupted him by calling him to order. Thereupon the storm burst forth in all its fury. St Just was not allowed to continue, and Billaud-Varennés got possession of the tribune, whence he delivered a vehement philippic against Robespierre and his associates. Bursts of applause broke from all parts of the Assembly, amidst which Robespierre, livid with rage and agitation, mounted the steps of the tribune, and from behind Billaud demanded with passionate gesticulations to be heard. At his appearance a howl of execration greeted him. Down with the tyrant! down with the tyrant! resounded in deafening echoes. He still persisted in claiming to speak, but his voice was stifled in clamour. Tallien, fearing lest the ebullition might subside, and the blow fail to be struck at the critical moment, tore him from the tribune, and in a paroxysm of excitement moved the immediate impeachment of the tyrant. ‘I have already asked,’ he cried, ‘that the veil should be torn from guilt. I rejoice to see that it is now completely so; the conspirators are unmasked, they will soon be annihilated, and liberty will triumph! I was present yesterday at the sitting of the

Jacobins, and I shuddered for the safety of the country! I saw the army of the new Cromwell formed, and I armed myself with a dagger to plunge into his breast if the National Convention lacked strength to pass a decree of accusation against him! Here he drew forth a dagger, and brandished its glittering blade in the air amidst vehement shouts. Barrère succeeded him in the tribune, and unfolded a plan devised by the Committees to meet the emergency, in accordance with which decrees of impeachment were passed against Henriot and others of the more active conspirators, the commandship-in-chief of the National Guard was suppressed, and the mayor and Commune summoned to the bar to answer for the tranquillity of the capital. Tallien, however, returned to the charge against Robespierre, and again in a vehement harangue demanded his immediate impeachment. Robespierre once more essayed to speak, but he was repulsed with overpowering shouts of *Down with the tyrant!—arrest!—impeachment!* Palpitating and foaming with rage, he exclaimed with all his force, ‘For the last time, president of assassins, I claim to be heard.’ Thuriot, who occupied the president’s chair answered this appeal by ringing his bell with eager violence. A deputy shouted out at the pitch of his voice, and was audible above the din, ‘The blood of Danton chokes thee!’ The younger Robespierre rose in his place and said, ‘I am equally guilty with my brother; I partake his virtues, and I desire to partake his fate.’ ‘*To the vote! to the vote!*’ was vociferated from all quarters and at length, amidst a tremendous commotion, the question was put and carried. A decree of impeachment was passed against Robespierre, his brother, St Just, Couthon, and Lebas, and they were delivered into the hands of the gendarmes to be conducted to prison. The last words uttered by Robespierre as he left the hall were, ‘The Republic is ruined; the brigands triumph!’ But the members of the Convention, beside themselves with joy at their anticipated deliverance, gave vent to their rapturous feelings in long continued shouts of *Liberty for ever! The Republic for ever! The tyrants are no more!*

But the victory was by no means so sure or complete as they fondly thought; the issue still trembled in the balance, and final success was yet to be achieved by the party which should display the greatest daring and promptitude. Through an imprudence which nearly proved fatal, the Convention suspended its sitting until seven in the evening, leaving the Commune and the Jacobins to act as they thought fit in the interim. Fortunately these were not prepared for the sudden turn affairs had taken; and it was only after learning the arrest of Robespierre that they adopted measures to organise an insurrection. Then a proclamation was issued to the people calling upon them to rise; the battalions of the sections were summoned to assemble, the tocsin was sounded

from the Hôtel de Ville, and all the usual means followed for exciting a popular outbreak. Henriot scoured the streets on horseback with several officers of his staff, brandishing his sword in the air, and crying on all who heard him to take up arms and save the country. On his way he encountered the carts conducting the daily sacrifice of victims to the guillotine, and who upon this last occasion amounted to forty-nine in number. When the intelligence of Robespierre's apprehension spread, the people had stopped the carts, and demanded the liberation of the prisoners. It was at this moment Henriot came up; and the wretch, half frantic with drunkenness and excitement, dispersed the crowd, and directed the carts to proceed, although the executioner himself—the famous Samson—joined in interceding for the postponement of the execution. Continuing his course along the quays of the Seine, Henriot arrived in the Place du Carrouzel, and attempted to make his way into the Tuileries, then known as the National Palace; but being stopped by the gendarmes on duty, he and some of his followers were arrested, pinioned, and carried before the Committee of General Security. Meanwhile the Commune had sent orders to all the keepers of prisons not to receive any persons into custody except upon a warrant from the municipality, and in consequence Robespierre and his companions, who had been sent to different prisons, were refused admission by the jailors, and were ultimately lodged in the general police-office of the Mairie, whence they were at once carried in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. There they were received with enthusiasm, and by their presence gave an additional stimulus to the movement. A committee of insurrection was organised, consisting of twelve members, in whom were vested for the time being all the powers of the sovereign people. By command of this committee, Coffinhal, president of the Jacobin Club, proceeded with some companies of the sections to release Henriot from confinement at the Tuileries. This task he accomplished sword in hand, put the members of the Committees to flight, and bore away Henriot and his comrades to the general rendezvous at the Hôtel de Ville.

At seven o'clock the Convention reassembled in alarm and confusion. The most sinister rumours were circulated, and the members clustered in groups, conversing on the impending dangers. Shortly, Henriot was announced to be already on the Place du Carrouzel at the head of the armed sections, and engaged in planting his artillery against the Palace. Collot d'Herbois took the chair with great courage and firmness. 'Representatives of the people,' he said, putting on his hat, in sign of distress, 'the moment is come for dying at our post. Villains have made themselves masters of the National Palace.' At these solemn words the members all assumed their seats, and awaited

in a dignified attitude the attack they momentarily expected. The occupiers of the galleries rushed tumultuously from the scene of danger, raising cries of fury, and leaving behind them a cloud of dust. It was proposed that the Convention should issue forth in a body, and as on the 2d of June, try the effect of its united majesty on the armed populace. Remembrance of the previous failure was too vivid for such a course to be pursued, and happily it proved unnecessary. Henriot had given orders to the artillerymen to fire their guns, but they had refused to obey him. This being made known to the Convention, Henriot was immediately outlawed; and the decree being carried to the troops outside, he had only time to save himself from seizure by putting spurs to his horse and flying with all speed to the Commune. Emboldened by this first success, the Convention forthwith passed decrees of outlawry against Robespierre and all his associates, appointed Barras to the command of the National Guard, assisted by seven others of its members, and nominated deputies to repair to the sections and neutralise the efforts of the insurgents. Barras, who was a man capable of bold determination, proceeded to gain over the troops assembled around the Convention by acquainting them with its decrees; and he succeeded in establishing his command over them. Several battalions of the sections were likewise rallied to the rescue of the Convention, and by ten o'clock upwards of three thousand men were collected on the Place du Carrouzel under arms, and with some pieces of artillery. An assault was expected from the Hôtel de Ville; but as no assailing force appeared, it was resolved to assume the offensive, and march against the centre of the insurrection itself. Never had Paris been in a state of more extraordinary agitation. The emissaries of the Commune and of the Convention met each other in the sections, and strove by harangues to win them to their respective sides. Some of the companies responded to the summons of the Commune, others to the appeal of the Convention. Thus two hostile bodies were mustered under the banners of the one or the other, and were now arrayed in mass on the several fields of combat. The bulk of the inhabitants awaited in their houses with anxiety and trepidation the issue of the momentous struggle which was to decide the fate of the Revolution; and the apprehension extending even to the prisons, all their unfortunate inmates were distracted by the hopes and fears excited in them through the partial and dubious accounts they were enabled to glean of the great catastrophe impending. They knew only that their persecutors had at length quarrelled amongst themselves, and were about to fight for the mastery, but on which side victory might incline, and whether it would be to them the augury of life or death, they were ignorant, and they remained in all the dreadful suspense of a cruel uncertainty.

The chief conspirators were still assembled at the Hôtel de Ville. They were full of confidence in their ultimate triumph; for Henriot assured them he could answer for the sections, and they employed themselves in preparing addresses to the armies and in making out lists of proscripts. But they were soon startled from this security, and thrown into consternation, by intelligence of the decrees passed by the Convention, and of troops marching to attack them. Henriot rushed down stairs and found the Place de Grève almost vacant. The declaration of outlawry had produced a magical effect on the armed citizens. On the approach of the Conventional troops, they for the most part dispersed, some marching off in companies to their respective sections, others commingling in the ranks of the invading force. The Hôtel de Ville, and the conclave of conspirators within it, were thus left completely defenceless. Nevertheless, so great was the dread inspired by these redoubted Revolutionists, that Barras advanced to the attack with the greatest caution. When he found the approaches of the Place de Grève destitute of defenders, he conceived fears of an ambushade, and even that the Hôtel de Ville had been undermined. It was past midnight, and but a faint light gleamed from a hazy moon. Far from resistance being intended, however, all was terror and confusion in the councils of the conspirators. Upon the return of Henriot to announce the desertion of the troops, Coffinhal seized him by the waist and hurled him headlong from an open window, exclaiming, 'Thy cowardice, villain, has undone us!' Robespierre drew a pistol and attempted to shoot himself through the head, but he only wounded his jaw. His brother and Coffinhal jumped out of the window, and fell dreadfully mutilated. Lebas alone succeeded in killing himself. Couthon made some ineffectual efforts to stab himself with a knife. St Just remained firm and collected. A detachment of the National Guard, headed by a courageous deputy, Leonard Bourdon, speedily burst into the hall of the Commune and made prisoners of all who were found in it. These were forthwith conveyed to the Convention amidst triumphant shouts of victory. Robespierre and his wounded companions were carried on shutters, and deposited for the night in the room of the Committee of General Security. Stretched on a table, and attempting to stanch with pieces of paper the blood that oozed from his wound, Robespierre uttered no complaints, but remained exposed for several hours with sullen indifference to the gaze and insults of the crowd who flocked to view him in his agony. Some of his own colleagues in the Committee of Public Safety are even stated to have reviled and spit upon him whilst undergoing this mental and physical torture. In the morning his jaw was dressed by a surgeon, and after that operation, which he bore with perfect apathy, he and his companions, to the

number of twenty-one, were removed to the Conciergerie preparatory to their trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Fouquier-Tinville appeared to prosecute his old patrons with wonted zest; and as in consequence of their outlawry, evidence of identity only was required, the process of their condemnation was sufficiently speedy. At four in the afternoon of the 10th Thermidor they were placed in carts and conducted to the Place de la Révolution, whither they had despatched so many hundreds of innocent victims. A boisterous crowd surrounded the criminals in their passage, and Robespierre especially was assailed with frightful imprecations. On ascending the scaffold, the executioner seized him by the arm and showed him to the multitude, who applauded the spectacle with exulting vociferations. He then tore with rudeness the bandage from his jaw, and for the first time Robespierre uttered an exclamation of pain. He suffered death, nevertheless, with the apparent insensibility he had manifested since his seizure; and of all his companions in misfortune, Couthon alone displayed any signs of mental anguish. The younger Robespierre, Coffinhal, and Henriot, were almost dead from the bruises they received in falling on the pavement. As the axe of the guillotine descended on each of their necks, a shout of acclamation arose from the crowd, which was reverberated to the extremities of the city; and amidst a heartfelt and universal joy the *Reign of Terror* was at last brought to a close.

In dismissing Robespierre from the scene, and passing a final judgment on him, it is fitting to state that whilst his name is indelibly associated with a series of the most revolting crimes that have ever been committed by men in the abuse of power or in the frenzy of passion, he was perhaps not the worst of those who acted with him. The emphatic testimony of Napoleon is recorded in his favour; and during the period immediately preceding his downfall, he undoubtedly condemned the massacres of the Revolutionary Tribunal in letters to his brother and others possessing his confidence; but it is to be remembered that he had then seceded from the government, and was naturally led to express dissatisfaction with its proceedings. There is nothing in his conduct to support a belief that if he had subjugated the Convention, and established his own despotic rule, he would have put in practice, more than he had ever previously done, those elevated sentiments he was continually invoking. In his public life, certainly, no instance can be quoted, nor in private life is any anecdote related of him (whilst such exist even of Marat), by which he is known ever to have performed a generous and purely benevolent action, or to have been inspired with other emotions than those of animosity, egotism, and selfishness. At the same time, it is true that he had a certain latent wish to befriend and ameliorate the mass of the people, but by means which

should emanate wholly from himself, and by a system in which he should exercise an arbitrary sway, unruffled by the faintest whisper of opposition. Upon the whole, therefore, if in some points of his career—such as disapproving the death of Marie-Antoinette, and interposing to save from execution the seventy-three deputies arrested after the fall of the Girondins—he seems to have been surpassed in wickedness and ferocity by his colleagues, he not the less remains branded with the infamy of being, under an affected or self-deceived love of freedom and virtue, the most relentless of tyrants, the most malevolent of hypocrites, and, in a word, one of the most atrocious of historical characters.

CHAPTER X.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIRECTORY—CONQUEST OF BELGIUM, HOLLAND,
AND ITALY—JULY 1794 TO JANUARY 1797.

No catastrophe in the history of a nation was ever more productive of happier results than the overthrow of Robespierre in France. Identified as he had been in the eyes of his countrymen and of the world with the horrible system of the Jacobin government, his destruction seemed necessarily to involve its reversal. The prospect was hailed with an explosion of joy the most heartfelt and tumultuous ever witnessed among a vast population, and all the figures of metaphor might be exhausted in a vain effort to portray the auspicious change from the gloom of terror and despair to the sunshine of gladness and hope. It is sufficient that a weight was felt to be removed, which allowed men to breathe again with freedom—a darkness to be dispelled which had banished the rays of light from the earth. The reaction in all feelings was immediate and irresistible, under the influence of which the Jacobins in turn were exposed to persecution. It is natural in civil strife that the cruelties of a predominant party should be visited on it by retaliations when subverted, and those of the Jacobins were too recent and monstrous not to arouse the direst spirit of revenge. On the day following the execution of Robespierre, sixty of his associates in the Commune and the Jacobin Club were condemned to death, and consigned to the guillotine. Several of the judges and jurymen of the Revolutionary Tribunal likewise suffered the same fate; but none perished in the storm of retribution amidst more universal satisfaction than Fouquier-Tinville, the public accuser, and Carrier, the murderer of Nantes. The trial of the first served to disclose the manifold iniquities which had been

perpetrated in the condemnations of prisoners, the precipitation with which they had been given, the mistakes that had been made in the identity of parties, the total denial of the most ordinary means of exculpation. It was proved that in numerous instances judgments had been signed in blank, and the names of persons afterwards inserted by clerks at pleasure or at random. These revelations, coupled with those elicited on the trial of Carrier, excited abhorrence and indignation; so stirring the public mind, that by a spontaneous impulse the whole burgher class of the community rose in combination and formed the famous *Jeunesse Dorée*, or Gilded Youth, who henceforth exercised an important influence on the course of the Revolution. These stood forth as determined enemies of the Jacobins, assuming a distinctive dress, and carrying short clubs loaded with lead. Furious conflicts took place between the opposing parties in the streets and public places, particularly the Palais-Royal and the garden of the Tuileries, in which the bands of the *Jeunesse Dorée* were generally successful. Paris was often for several days together the scene of this tumultuous strife, and twice the seat of the Jacobin Club itself was stormed by its victorious adversaries. On one of these occasions, the women found within the purlieus of the revolutionary temple were seized and subjected to an ignominious flagellation, amid commingled shrieks and shouts of laughter. At length the Convention was obliged to interfere, for the sake of the public peace, and after first suspending the sittings of the Jacobins, that they might purge themselves of feculent members, eventually dissolved their association altogether, and closed the place of its meetings: so terminating the existence of the most celebrated of modern political unions, which had operated in its time some good to the cause of freedom, obscured in a thick cloud of evil.

The affiliated societies in the departments shared the fate of the parent institution, and throughout France the late paramount faction was prostrated through the overthrow of its effective organisation. Henceforth the ultra-revolutionists, having lost both the Commune and the Jacobin Club, were deprived of those formidable means of agitation which they had hitherto uniformly wielded with such potency and success, and were rendered comparatively powerless. Against the prevailing spirit of reaction they could offer only a desultory and ill-managed resistance, which in its consequences plunged them into irremediable ruin.

With the fall of Robespierre, the Convention became in reality what it had been under him but nominally—the supreme authority of the Republic. The surviving colleagues of the tyrant, who had co-operated in his dethronement with the expectation of succeeding to his lapsed dominion, made a strenuous effort to continue the old system of dictation, and would fain have prolonged

under their own sway the terrible agencies that had been so long in operation; but the *Thermidorians* (for such was the appellation assigned to the fusion of parties which had mainly effected the 9th Thermidor) were led by men too resolute and ambitious to forego a predominance they had achieved at such risk, and, on the contrary, remodelled the governing committees in their own interest. Still, these latter were pledged and even sincere Republicans, who sought rather to arrest than to accelerate the strong counter-current which had so suddenly set in; for they justly feared it might swell Royalist hopes, and upheave, if not the throne itself, the most dangerous and rancorous of the extinct factions. With the example of England before their eyes, where an abrupt revulsion from an excess of religious fanaticism had terminated a democratic revolution to the increased advantage of the royal power, they were justified in dreading a similar catastrophe from the ebb of political frenzy, and in exercising caution, lest under the adverse mania the whole fabric of the Republic might be swept away. Hence they refused to embrace the measures of swift retrogression which the more impatient impulse of public opinion would have forced upon them, and only with slowness and deliberation retraced the steps of their predecessors, and, so to speak, turned back the Revolution upon itself. Thus although the principles of mercy and toleration had superseded the hideous dogmas of the Jacobins, the prisons were not at once thrown open and their eager inmates released from a tantalising thralldom; on the contrary, the liberations took place gradually, and under restrictions of bail, which were not, however, always attended to, as the new members of the Committees were exposed to solicitations it was difficult for them to withstand. Few fresh incarcerations were made, and those only of the fallen party; but it was not until several months had passed that the millenium of a general emancipation was consummated, and bereaved families made happy by the restoration of long-lost relatives, rendered doubly dear by the dangers they had incurred. So also with regard to the Revolutionary Tribunal. Although in the first ardour of success and outburst of repressed horror the Convention had decreed its instant abolition, that decree was rescinded, and it was not finally suppressed until the middle of 1795, being, however, changed in its members, forms, and constitution during the interim. On other subjects the same policy was pursued. The fever of revolutionary passion had cooled, and given way to ideas of moderation and order, but it was still essential to uphold for a time at least measures that had sprung from the great necessities of the Revolution, and even from its very atrocities. The party of the Thermidorians included the great majority of the Convention, comprehending the large residuum known as the *Belly*; but it was chiefly ruled by men who had been friends of Danton—as Tallien, Legendre, Thuriot, Fréron—who were inte-

rested to defend all the sanguinary epochs of the Revolution as implicated in them, not more the 10th August and the 21st January, than the 31st May and the 2d June.* Accordingly the law of the maximum and of requisitions was only relaxed, and not definitively abrogated until the new character of events grew more decided from the progress of general opinion, which must in the end prevail over the firmest tendencies of a popular assembly. So also the reintegration of the seventy-three deputies who had been cast out and imprisoned, subsequent to the fall of the Girondins, was resisted and postponed—albeit an act of imperative justice, and eventually carried only after an interval of four months. Their return, together with that of the survivors among the proscribed deputies, gave an additional stimulus to the reacting spirit in the Convention, and tended materially to promote a decisive rupture with the system of terror and all its abettors. Then the decrees against priests and nobles were repealed, the celebration of Christian worship permitted in churches, the busts of Marat thrown down and destroyed, Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, Barrère, and Vadier, committed to prison, and ordered to be tried for their past crimes. The conduct of government was vested in sixteen committees, all independent of each other, and subject to the Convention alone, that of Public Safety being shorn of its sovereign attributes, and limited to the direction of military and diplomatic affairs. The Committee of General Security exercised the important functions of police, and held very extensive powers, with little check upon their abuse save the altered tone of opinion. Thus from an extreme concentration of power, the administration of government passed to an excessive dissemination, so powerful was the fear and jealousy of a revival of the tyranny. At the same time manners underwent a radical change. The natural levity and gaiety of the French character were displayed in a remarkable manner. The gloom and constraint of the Jacobin rule were discarded and cast off with joyous alacrity; the thirst for amusement and dissipation rose into a mania, as usual after a period of depression and privation; pleasure was sought in every shape, and in endless variety; whilst instead of the squalid attire of sans-culottism, richness and elegance of dress were affectingly studied. The females especially, whom the forced economy of adornment had more particularly galled, revenged themselves for the mortification of vanity by a boundless latitude of caprice and extravagance. The ancient Greek costume became the prevailing fashion among them, and they vied with each other in veiling their forms under

* So little did the Convention at first yield to the new impulse, that it permitted, two months after the 9th Thermidor, the body of Marat to be deposited in the Pantheon with great solemnity, in accordance with the decree passed at the time of his death, the execution of which Robespierre had always interfered to prevent. In less than four months the body was again ejected with ignominy.

the thinnest possible textures, whilst with the pristine sandal the naked foot was adopted. Society being all unhinged, the obligations of religion disregarded, and the canons of conventionalism itself abjured, the state of morality was loose, and the tie of marriage scarcely considered a necessity or an impediment. The plebeian element so largely preponderating likewise, the tone of feeling was coarse, and manners were tainted with vulgarity equally in their essence and their aberrations. Nevertheless in certain circles refinement and grace reigned in all their wonted lustre. Josephine Beauharnais, the widow of the general who had been guillotined, and who would have met the same doom had Robespierre lived another day; Madame Cabarrus, now the wife of Tallien, and who had first weaned him by her seductions from his native brutality, a young Spaniard of ravishing beauty; Madame Recamier, celebrated for her touching amiability and matchless charms; Madame de Stüel, illustrious by her immortal writings, the wife of the Swedish ambassador—all presided in saloons whose finished politeness recalled those of the exploded regime. As a memento of the era, a species of entertainment was invented unexampled in the quaintness of its device. Balls were held, called 'the Balls of the Victims,' in which appeared only the relatives of persons who had suffered death, and who wore their hair in like fashion as when adjusted for the axe of the guillotine.

But if one part of the population of Paris could afford thus to revel in the amenities and enjoyments of life, and repay past sufferings by present gratifications, it was far different with the bulk of its inhabitants. The winter of 1794-5 was not surpassed by its precursor in the magnitude of the famine that prevailed. The law of the maximum being repealed, and the system of forced requisitions abandoned, trade had not yet resumed its accustomed course, and it became a difficulty of hourly emergency to provide supplies for the capital. It was at length found requisite to put the people on rations, and each individual was limited to one pound of bread a day, which was at intervals reduced to two ounces. Boissy d'Anglas was chairman of the Committee for Supplies of Food (*des subsistances*), and he laboured incessantly, in emulation of the unfortunate Bailly of old, to procure the quantity of flour requisite for the daily consumption of the capital; and his cares, instead of winning him the gratitude of the populace, gained him their virulent abuse and hatred. They called him, in malignant derision, *Famine Boissy*. It was natural, under such circumstances, that there should be constant commotions, and that the discomfited Jacobins should find it easy to excite insurrections among a population inflamed at once by hunger and the loss of political power, with its accompaniment of forty sous a day. Accordingly, throughout the winter popular disturbances were frequent, the motto of the rioters being, *Bread and the Con-*

stitution of 1793! But although alarm was thus continually kept up, no more serious outbreak took place than the Jeunesse Dorée could readily suppress. Upon the arrest of Billaud and his colleagues, however, the Jacobins were rendered desperate, and they contrived to incite the people of the faubourgs to a more formidable demonstration. On the forenoon of the 12th Germinal (1st April 1795) a tumultuous crowd burst through the defences of the palace, and poured into the hall of the Convention. The remaining members of the Mountain—now distinguished as the Cretois—received the insurgents with acclamations; but the Thermidorians and Girondins retired with affright, and proceeded to levy forces to resist the invasion. Meanwhile motions were made for the liberation of the imprisoned patriots, but from the violence of the mob no deliberation was possible. Several hours thus passed amidst an indescribable confusion, until a muster of the Jeunesse Dorée and some battalions of the sections arrived on the Carrouzel, and by their bare appearance at once crushed the insurrection. The rabble withdrew, venting denunciations on the representatives of the nation, who, being relieved from danger, forthwith took measures of revenge. Billaud, Collot, Barrère, and Vadier, were condemned to be transported to the pestilential colony of Cayenne; and seventeen of the Mountain, who had taken a conspicuous part in the outrage, were apprehended, and committed close prisoners to the Castle of Ham. Among these latter were Thuriot, who had relapsed to Jacobinism from hatred of the Girondins; Cambon, long the chief director of the finances; Amar, a principal actor in the overthrow of Robespierre; and other turbulent demagogues. Barrère succeeded in effecting his escape, and lived to a very old age in an obscure retreat at Brussels, where he died in 1841. He was the most despicable of the men who had ruled France in the days of terror—not having, like his fellow-culprits, the exculpation of a real and strong conviction. He is said to have descanted in his dotage on the sin of taking human life as a punishment of crime—an opinion formed probably from the retrospections of remorse. Collot d'Herbois died mad under the burning sun of the tropics; Billaud-Varennès eluded his keepers, and ran a romantic career in Mexico and Haiti, ending his life at Philadelphia in the United States of America.

As had been apprehended by the more discreet Thermidorians, the violent reaction against Jacobinism speedily resuscitated the Royalists. The emigrant princes and nobility had begun to form somewhat more rational notions touching the prospect of subjugating their country by the arms of foreigners, and had turned their attention to the project of effecting a restoration by means of internal agitation. They despatched emissaries into every quarter of France, and established a head agency at Paris, which

became the focus of a very formidable conspiracy against the Republic. In truth the condition of France was eminently propitious for the Royalist cause. Nothing could be conceived more deplorable. Revolutions are generally in the end conducive of good, from the lessons they teach mankind: and the beneficial warnings that have flowed from the French Revolution in particular can be well appreciated at the present day, but they are very grievous to the generations that experience them. The current one of France certainly suffered evils unparalleled among nations. Not a single province had escaped the horrors of civil war or foreign invasion, and all had been equally scourged by exterminating proconsuls. The pursuits of industry were paralysed; the chief seats of commerce and manufactures had been purposely destroyed; agriculture languished under the accumulated pressure of the requisitions, the maximum and want of sinews; trade was confined to mere necessities, as among a barbarous people, and reduced almost to a state of barter; foreign commerce had ceased altogether, both from the superiority of the British at sea, and the lack of means to carry it on. In addition, a famine raged in all the principal cities of the Republic; whilst the whole of the southern departments were again the scene of a horrible bloodshed, through the retaliations executed on the Jacobins by organised bands of Royalist assassins called Companies of Jesus and of the Sun, who perpetrated massacres in the prisons and streets of Lyons, Marseilles, Tarascon, Aix, and other towns, that rivalled in atrocity the famed deeds of September 1792 in Paris. On the west and north, La Vendée was still in arms, and the theatre of an incessant conflict; Normandy and Bretagne were overrun by swarms of Chouans, who defied all attempts at suppression. It was natural that such a load of miseries should make sad the hearts of men, and cause them to sigh for any remedy, however desperate. Liberty was a chimera, that had brought in its train unutterable woes, and a restoration of the monarchy seemed the only resource against their continuance. Such was growing to be the prevalent persuasion among the great bulk of the population, especially in the provinces, and among influential members of the Convention itself. Many of the reintegrated Girondins doubtless secretly inclined to the cause of monarchy—a constitutional monarchy unquestionably, if attainable—as bitter experience had taught them to modify their admiration of a republic. Even Tallien himself, the most important personage at the time in France, had come to partake the same tendency, as there seems sufficient reason to infer.* Such a change of principles was by no means unlikely in one of

* Thibaudeau quotes authorities that appear conclusive on the point, and among the rest a letter from the prince, afterwards Louis XVIII.—*Mém. sur la Convention*, vol. i. p. 230.

his character, if circumstances had favoured his avowal of them. The same may be said of many others who had been hot Revolutionists; and in this period of decisive reaction, nothing perhaps could have averted a restoration but the insane conduct of the European powers. By their interference they had called into being a new element, which speedily devoured all the rest—namely, the spirit of military prowess and national aggrandisement. The glories and greatness of the country were identified with the Revolution, and the sense of suffering mitigated amid the blaze of continual victories. Thus it happened that the armies were thoroughly Republican, no leaven of Royalism having ever penetrated into their ranks, and henceforth they were to form the paramount power in the State.

The campaign of 1794 had proved one of the most brilliant for France recorded in her annals. The allies had sustained a series of disgraceful defeats on every frontier where they waged war. From the immense levies of the previous year, the French had a force ready to take the field of 700,000 men. The principal theatre of operations was necessarily Flanders, from which the Austrians and British threatened Paris with 200,000 men. Carnot, who had almost the exclusive management of the war department, directed on that point two armies—one under Pichegru, called the Army of the North, another under Jourdan, called the Army of the Moselle, subsequently that of the Sambre and Meuse. The Prince of Coburg still commanded the Imperialists, having under him Mack and Clairfayt. The Duke of York also continued at the head of the heterogeneous British contingent. As confident hopes were indulged of making a rapid march to Paris, and, moreover, as York was disposed to mutiny against the authority of Coburg, the Emperor of Germany came in person to head-quarters, both to share the triumph, and to reconcile the differences of command. An attack upon the French Army of the North was planned, in the absence of Pichegru on the Sambre, by which it was proposed to surround, overwhelm, and exterminate it. This led to the battle of Turcoing, fought on the 18th May, in which the French, conducted by Souham and Moreau, completely worsted the Austrians and British, the Duke of York escaping capture only through the superior speed of his horse. Subsequently, on the 26th June, Jourdan repulsed Coburg under the walls of Charleroi, in a tremendous conflict celebrated as the battle of Fleurus. In consequence of these victories, the French succeeded in separating the allies, York being driven towards the coast, Clairfayt and Coburg back on Brussels, whither the two French commanders quickly followed them, and which they entered on the 10th July, there combining their forces to the number of 150,000 fighting men. Here the latter paused in their advance, owing as well to the great struggle going on at Paris, as

to the necessity of reducing the fortresses previously taken by the Austrians within the French frontier. Coburg was cashiered for his reverses by the Aulic Council, and Clairfayt nominated generalissimo, who took post behind the Ourthe, a tributary of the Meuse. York, with about 45,000 men, essayed to cover Antwerp. On the resumption of operations in September, Jourdan again defeated Clairfayt in the battle of Ruremonde, and compelled him to cross the Rhine at Cologne, on the ramparts of which city he unfurled the victorious tricoloured flag. Pichegru on his part expelled York; and by the middle of October the whole of Belgium was subdued. The conquest of Holland followed, by a miraculous exploit of Pichegru. One of the severest frosts ever known in Europe occurred during the winter of 1794-5, by which the canals and rivers of that country, forming its famed defences, were all congealed into solid ice. Seizing the favourable occasion, Pichegru boldly invaded it; and meeting with but a slender opposition, marched into Amsterdam on the 18th January 1795, amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, who had been long disgusted with the rule of the House of Orange. The weak suffer fearfully in the contests of the strong. The British government, seeing the fate in store for the Dutch, carried off forty of their ships of war; and a squadron of French cavalry, galloping across the Zuyder Zee, captured the remainder of their fleet lying frozen in the ice-bound waters of Texel. Beyond insisting, however, upon a compulsory circulation of assignats, and exacting supplies for the army, which was in a most destitute condition, the French treated the Dutch with remarkable forbearance, and displayed a moderation which shone in favourable contrast with their earlier conduct in Belgium.

Meanwhile the operations on the Rhine had been comparatively insignificant. The king of Prussia had fully determined to take no further part in the war, and steadily resisted all the importunities of the English and Austrian cabinets to allow his army to co-operate with that of the emperor. He was about to withdraw his forces altogether, when Pitt, in terrible alarm at his defection, offered to take them into British pay. To this proposal the mean-spirited monarch acceded; but with a nefariousness which is perhaps without a parallel even in the perfidies of princes, he took the subsidy, and violated the condition on which it was paid. His general, Mollendorf, listened with imperturbable indifference to the energetic remonstrances of Lord Cornwallis, who was deputed to attend the Prussian army on the part of England, and who roundly charged him with treachery, fraud, and deceit. As the French were aware of the secret sentiments of the king of Prussia, they did little to molest his troops, and contented themselves with occupying the whole Palatinate and left bank of the Rhine, laying siege to Luxembourg and Mayence, which were

the only fortresses now remaining in the hands of the allies on the west side of that river. With their calamities, the potentates waxed in wrath against each other; and the king of Prussia after indulging in a laugh at Pitt, and in an anathema at the emperor, openly seceded from the coalition, and commenced negotiations with France for peace. This was soon after concluded at Basle, where the conferences were held. Austria was very much disposed to follow the example, being anxious to direct her efforts for securing a share of Poland; and Pitt had to stimulate her by a fresh fee of six millions sterling to keep her steadfast in the war. In the south, similar successes attended the French arms. The entire chain of the Alps was wrested from the hands of the Piedmontese, and Italy laid open to invasion from both the upper and lower ridges; an enterprise which would have been undertaken in pursuance of a plan submitted to the Committee of Public Safety by young Bonaparte, who enjoyed the favour of Robespierre from the recommendation of his brother, but for the event of the 9th Thermidor, after which it was abandoned. On the side of the Pyrenees, the Spaniards were expelled from the soil of France, on which they had wintered, and their own provinces of Biscay and Catalonia invaded by two armies, one under Dugommier, and the other under Moncey. Both of these gained several decisive advantages over the Spanish forces, and captured with great ease sundry renowned fortresses—as Fontarabia, St. Sebastian, Figueras, and Rosas. Justly alarmed at this unexpected and successful inroad of the Republicans, the Spanish government made proposals for peace, which occasioned a cessation of hostilities. The solitary triumph of the allies was gained by the British in a naval conflict at sea on the 1st June 1794, in which the French admiral, Villaret-Joyeuse, lost seven ships of the line, one being sunk, and six captured by his adversary Lord Howe. This achievement filled with delight the government and people of England, but afforded little consolation to the continental powers for their great reverses. The coalition which had been formed to crush the French Revolution was therefore in a very tottering condition, two of the powers being already lost to it—Prussia and Holland; another on the point of withdrawing—Spain; and a fourth, Austria, only retained in it by lavish bribes from England. Its original purpose was completely foiled; and it may be asked why England alone should have been so desperately intent to continue the war, since from her insular position she incurred far less danger from the contagion of revolution than any of her confederates? But in truth, notwithstanding her comparatively popular government, in no country was the Revolution detested with so intense a hatred; in the absolute monarchies of Europe the feeling was, in comparison, tame and placid. The cause of this was to be found in the mortal trepidation

tion of the aristocracy for the continuance of its supremacy—a motive not nearly so cogent among other communities, except perhaps in the effete oligarchy of Venice. Such was the real ground of the war, and of its inveterate prosecution; the alleged reasons being shifted by Pitt with every new phase of the encounter. His professed objects were continually defeated, as often indeed as he varied them; and he may be said to have mainly insured the success of the Revolution and the subsequent military domination of France. But he accomplished the transcendent aim; and through a character of indomitable firmness and tenacity, maintained the aristocratical element in more than its integrity, which constitutes his great merit in the eyes of his admirers; for their excessive adulation would be supremely ridiculous on any other supposition towards a man whose belligerent schemes invariably miscarried, and who was so instrumental in subjecting the world to the chance of a universal monarchy.

Amidst its stupendous triumphs over Europe, the government of France, it is curious to observe, remained as it were in vibration between the rabble of the Parisian faubourgs and the shopkeepers of the Palais-Royal and the Rue St Honoré. The Jacobins were far from being effectually subjugated, but, on the contrary, determined to make the most desperate efforts to recover their lost dominion. Undismayed by the consequences of their failure on the 12th Germinal, they organised a yet more powerful movement on the 1st Prairial (20th May), and beset the Convention with a force of 30,000 men. Never had such a scene been yet witnessed even on the worst occasions. Forcing their way into the hall with pikes and muskets, the rioters put the members to flight by a general discharge of shot; and levelling their pieces at Boissy d'Anglas, the president, threatened him with instant death unless he put to the vote the decrees they demanded. These were for the immediate enforcement of the constitution of 1793, the liberation of the imprisoned patriots, and the restoration of the Jacobin Club. A deputy named Féraud rushed forward to shield the president, and was run through the body with a pike. Being dragged into a corridor, his head was cut off, affixed to the end of a pike, and carried in triumph into the hall. A terrific tumult ensued, which continued for several hours, until the committees had collected a sufficient force to disperse the rebels. This was not effected till nearly midnight, when the battalions of three sections charged with the bayonet into the building, and after some resistance, cleared it of its invaders. The Convention passed the night in adopting measures of vengeance. All further moderation was abjured, and a determination taken utterly to destroy the faction of the Jacobins. Not only the few Cretois who had openly taken part with the

insurgents, but all the representatives who had been concerned in the government of terror, were struck by a decree of arrest and impeachment, with the single exception of Carnot. These amounted in number to twenty-eight, eleven of whom were sent before a military commission, and six condemned to death—namely, Romme, Goujon, Duquesnoi, Duroi, Bourbotte, and Soubrany. The three first stabbed themselves to the heart on leaving the court; the three last wounded themselves ineffectually, and were executed whilst still living. The rest of the prisoners were sentenced to transportation, which henceforth became the favourite punishment for political offenders. Several ringleaders among the mob likewise were apprehended, and among these the actual murderer of Féraud, who was subsequently rescued on the scaffold by a fresh assault of the populace. Hereupon the Convention took the last decisive step, to prevent further insurrections, of disarming the faubourgs. The whole disposable force of the capital, comprising 20,000 sectionaries and 4000 troops of the line, was placed under the orders of General Menou, who surrounded the seditious localities, and menaced them with a bombardment. Overawed by this formidable demonstration, the people quietly submitted, and delivered up their arms—the famous pikes of the Revolution, and the cannons which had served to achieve such destructive effects. The reign of the sans-culottes was thus brought finally to an end. Having successively lost all their leaders, their own brute force was of no avail against the systematised action of a resolute government. They had used their power to such evil purpose, as at last to arouse against them all the other classes of the community, who with one accord co-operated to annihilate them. They had proved themselves, even for their own welfare, the worst of rulers, as could not fail to happen. Self-government is difficult to the individual, much more so to the nation, and it is only by careful training and education it can be properly exercised. How, then, could an ignorant and impassioned multitude, suddenly invested with authority, and surrounded by dangers, be expected to observe a rational calmness or a mature discretion? Such a consequence was not possible; but at the same time it is instructive that the experiment has been tried, and found to be so truly deplorable in its results.

It was the singular and melancholy destiny of the National Convention, engendered as it had been in blood, and engaged since in almost continual self-mutilation, that it was to terminate its existence amid a merciless slaughter of its generous and approved defenders. The constitution of 1793, so strenuously invoked by the expiring clamour of the Jacobins, was in total discordance with the altered state of opinion, as it had ever been with common sense. Hence it now devolved on the Convention

to invent a new one. This task it delegated to a committee of eleven members, three of whom at least afterwards acted as decided Royalists. But from the necessity of its position, it must perforce adhere to the Republican form of government, and even combat with energy the tendency to monarchy. Accordingly, with the sounder notions acquired of political institutions from the painful experience of the past, previous errors were sought to be avoided, but no proposition was hazarded for the resurrection of a king. The poor child who had inherited a claim to the throne had just finished his miserable life in the prison of the Temple, the victim of unexampled neglect and barbarity. The Count de Provence, therefore, stood next in succession, according to the old law excluding females; but he was an emigrant, and had levied war upon the French people. So if the design had been really entertained, it would have been difficult to find a person eligible to act the pageant of a monarch; as it was, no such purpose existed. The committee of eleven, therefore, applied itself to frame a modified Republican establishment, which should contain sufficient of the popular element with an adequate degree of executive force and stability. Thus in its wisdom it eliminated the directorial constitution. In this were provisions for the creation of five directors to wield the executive government, and of a legislature, consisting of two assemblies—one the Council of Five Hundred, exercising the function of initiating laws, the other the Council of Ancients, exercising the right of sanction or rejection; all the members of each being necessarily thirty and forty years of age respectively. In the nomination of deputies, direct election was avoided. Every male citizen of twenty-one had a vote, but he gave it in primary assemblies for the choice of electors only, who subsequently appointed the members of the councils. One-third of these latter was to be renewed every year on the 1st Prairial. The selection of persons as directors was vested in the Council of Five Hundred, who presented a list of names to the Council of Ancients. The directors appointed the ministers of the different departments, the generals of the armies, and the foreign ambassadors. The Convention approved the scheme, and decreed that it should be sent down to the primary assemblies for ratification by the nation.

Whatever might be the merits or defects of this constitution in theory, there was little doubt it would lead in practice to the subversion of the Revolution. In the prevailing spirit of the time, none could hope to be elected members of the councils but such as were extreme reactionists. Public animosity was excited to the highest pitch against the Jacobins, and the denunciation of *Terrorist* had become equally fatal with that formerly of *Aristocrat*. Beholding such a catastrophe in perspective, the

Convention deemed it a paramount duty to save the Revolution at all hazards, albeit the country was sick of it. In direct opposition, therefore, to the precedent set by the first National Assembly, it passed two decrees on the 5th and 13th Fructidor (22d and 30th August), enacting that for the first year two-thirds of its existing members should form part of the intended councils. These decrees produced an explosion which gave rise to the extraordinary spectacle of a Royalist insurrection in Paris. They were unanimously repudiated by the sectional assemblies of Paris, which insisted upon the unqualified dissolution of the Convention, and circulated addresses to all the departments bespeaking their co-operation. Encouraged by promises of support, and stimulated by the Royalist agency, at the head of which was an active and subtle intriguer named Lemaitre, who had completely gained over the troop of the Jeunesse Dorée, they determined upon resistance, and the section of Lepelletier at once hoisted the standard of revolt. This bold example decided all the rest, and on the morning of the 13th Vendemiaire (5th October), 30,000 sectionaries assembled under arms, commanded by General Danican, who had for lieutenants Duhoux, Lafond, and the Count de Maulevrier. These marched upon the palace of the Tuileries by all the approaches which led to it. But the Convention was prepared to receive them. Finding all efforts at a reconciliation hopeless, it had called 5000 men of the regular army to Paris, and dismissing Menou as too imbecile for the crisis, appointed Barras, as on the 9th Thermidor, to command the troops, which included a body of 1500 Jacobins, who were armed for the purpose by the Committee of General Security. Conscious of his own inadequacy, Barras intrusted the military arrangements to a young officer whose great abilities he had witnessed when a commissioner to the army in the south, and who, having been in disgrace since the 9th Thermidor, was at this time living in extreme indigence at Paris. This was Napoleon Bonaparte, a cadet of an old family in the island of Corsica, who had the misfortune to make his entry into public life in a sanguinary civil broil, which formed the subject of deep regret in after-life. Taking his measures with that extraordinary promptitude which marked his character, Bonaparte drew fifty pieces of cannon from the camp of Sablons, and planted them upon all the avenues of the Tuileries. He arranged his forces in the most skilful manner to act on the defensive, and distributed muskets to the deputies themselves, who were to operate as a body of reserve. The day was already far advanced before the insurgents deployed in strength through the streets leading to the Carrouzel, and the moment the heads of their columns appeared, Bonaparte saluted them with a terrific volley of grape shot. Staggered by this murderous fire, they

began to hesitate and recoil, whereupon the young general charged them with the band of Jacobins, who eagerly thirsted for revenge upon their former subduers. The conflict was of short duration, for nothing could withstand the onslaught of the troops, backed by incessant discharges of artillery. On all sides the unfortunate sectionaries were hewn down and worsted, retreating in the utmost confusion to the strongholds of their quarters. By six o'clock the battle was gained to the Convention; and on the forenoon of the 14th, the last remnant of the insurrection was suppressed. So decisive a victory tended to consolidate its authority, and with this important consequence it was satisfied. Through a generous policy, it treated the defeated rebels with the greatest clemency, and unlike the Jacobins, observed an exemplary moderation in success. The elections under the new constitution were quietly completed throughout France, and the nominations being duly made of the residuary two-thirds, which were also left to the electoral colleges, on the 4th Brumaire of the year IV. (26th October 1795), the Convention closed its wondrous session of more than three years. In its dying days, it expiated the furious passions by which it had been previously animated, and delivered up the government to the new Directory chastened in spirit and enlightened by the manifold vicissitudes of its career.

The first act of the new Councils was to appoint five directors; and to mark emphatically their unshaken loyalty to the Revolution, it was resolved to nominate persons only who had voted unconditionally for the death of Louis XVI. From the successive destruction of party leaders, the selection of eminent actors in the Revolution was greatly narrowed. New names, unmentioned in the great convulsions of the era, were now brought forth. The suffrages of the deputies fell upon Larevellière-Lepaux, Letourneur, Rewbell, Barras, and Sieyes—the two latter only being men of any decided reputation. Sieyes declined to serve, alleging, as was very true, that he was unfitted to exercise the functions of government, but in reality irritated at his own plan of a constitution having been rejected, and the celebrated Carnot was nominated in his stead. This new government was installed in the palace of the Luxembourg, which, from the general penury prevailing, was entirely destitute of furniture, insomuch that upon the first meeting of the directors they could be accommodated only with a deal table and four rush-bottomed chairs. They entered upon their duties, nevertheless, with a courageous determination to uphold the Republic, and carry it through the difficulties which threatened its existence. Of these the most imminent arose from the extreme factions of the Royalists and Jacobins, who had been alternately defeated on the 1st Prairial and the 13th Vendemiaire, but still maintained a dangerous agitation which kept Paris in a continual fever of excitement. The

press having been declared free, each party had its organs, distinguished by a licentiousness and virulence scarcely surpassed in the worst periods of the Revolution. Clubs, too, were revived—the Royalists establishing one under the name of the Clichy Club, the Jacobins one in the vaults of the Pantheon, and the Thermidorians another called the Club of Salm—in which the parties respectively assembled and organised their forces. The elements of discord, therefore, were rife and rampant, whilst the Directory rested for support exclusively on the Conventional members of the Councils and upon the army. Amidst this raging strife of political passions, the financial distress had become such as to paralyse the government in every branch of administration. The issue of assignats had gone on steadily increasing, notwithstanding their continued depreciation, until they far exceeded even the nominal value of the confiscated domains on which they were hypothecated. The emission, in fact, had reached the incredible amount of 45,000,000,000 of francs, or £1,800,000,000 sterling. With such a circulation, any paper money, however well secured, must have sunk materially in value; that of the French Revolution, exposed to so many doubtful contingencies, naturally fell into the lowest depth of discredit. At length an assignat of 200 francs was not worth one franc in specie, and it was manifestly impossible to continue such a monstrous system of finance. A contraction of the currency must by some means be effected, and the Directory devised an expedient for doing so somewhat more convenient than honest. Considering the depressed state of the assignats, and that the loss upon them had been pretty widely distributed, it proposed to exchange the assignat for a territorial *mandat* in the ratio of thirty for one, the mandat having the advantage of being convertible into real property by mere registration, and of possessing a compulsory circulation. This proposal was sanctioned by the Councils, and at first the change operated beneficially; but soon the same discredit attached to the mandates, and they became almost valueless as their forerunners. It was evident a paper currency could not be supported, and accordingly the existing issue was abandoned to its fate. All values were left to find their own level, and a national bankruptcy of course ensued. The assignat and mandat alike disappeared from circulation, since they were universally repudiated as worthless; and the government having exhausted this valuable resource recklessly and dissolutely, was driven to other shifts for raising money. These partook essentially of the revolutionary character, consisting of a forced loan of 600,000,000 francs in specie, and of 100,000,000 francs raised upon confiscated property in Belgium, which had been incorporated with the French Republic. Other expedients were adopted for anticipating the produce of the na-

tional domains, in the emission of obligations to contractors and to the annuitants and officials of the State, which amounted in the end to a prodigious aggregate, and entangled all financial elucidations in inextricable confusion. Meanwhile the armies and all individuals dependent for support upon the public exchequer suffered the severest privations, and were unable to provide themselves with the commonest necessities. But the conquest and spoliation of foreign countries gradually tended to alleviate the pressure upon the treasury, Republican indigence finding the refreshing counterpoise of abundance in the plains of Italy and Germany; whilst with growing confidence in the stability of the Revolution hoarded specie was disinterred, and soon an adequate circulation of the precious metals prevailed in France, for all the purposes at least of social interchange.

The Jacobins or Terrorists were the first to aim a vital stab at the Directory. A man called Babeuf, who arrogated the title of Tribune of the People, edited a paper, in which he reproduced Marat's now discarded theories, and advocated in addition an agrarian law, or the equable distribution of all property; thus excelling the Anarchists in their levelling wildness. Such doctrines still commanded a share of popular favour, but were incapable of stirring the masses as in the palmy days of sans-culottism; nevertheless among the great number of disappointed and displaced men they were adopted with enthusiasm. Old members of the committees under Robespierre, officers of the revolutionary army and tribunal, the fermenting residuum of the Commune and the Jacobin Club, were ready to embrace any formula or any scheme which promised to restore the reign of what they called 'true, pure, and absolute democracy.' Proselytes among the idle and the indigent were readily gained; the meetings at the Pantheon were attended by excited crowds, to whom such inflammatory ideas were congenially preached, and which at length attracted the attention of the Directory, who adopted prompt measures for suppressing them. On the 8th Ventose (26th February 1796) the doors of the Pantheon were closed, and the demagogues expelled, to propagate their insidious dogmas elsewhere. They continued to assemble, however, at a building which they denominated the *Temple of Reason*, where they mourned in lachrymose ditties the death of Marat and Robespierre, and where they ultimately digested a plan of insurrection. This was intended to be upon an extensive scale: active emissaries were distributed through the disaffected quarters of the city, and sent to tamper with the troops in the camp of Grenelle; a Committee of Public Safety was named; a programme of the new government drawn up; concentric movements upon the Directory and Councils all scientifically arranged. But the conspirators had, unfortunately for themselves, admitted to their

confidence one Grisel, a captain of the army at Grenelle, who betrayed their design to the government on the eve of its execution. On the same day, the 21st Floreal (10th May), the leaders were all apprehended in full conclave, and consigned for trial to the high criminal court of Vendôme. By this tribunal, owing to the more tempered feelings predominant, only two were condemned to death—namely, Babœuf himself, and Darthé, a chief accomplice, who, on hearing their sentence, stabbed themselves in the dock, but were executed whilst still alive. Seven others were doomed to suffer the punishment of transportation to a penal settlement. Babœuf was a fanatic and ideologist, who combined many of the notions of the subsequent St Simonians and Socialists with his political reveries, and was sincerely desirous of realising what he conceived to be the ‘universal welfare’ in a system of primitive equality and virtue. But his conspiracy excited the deepest alarm throughout France, from the intense dread of the revival of Terrorism, and its firm suppression consolidated the authority of the Directory. Still, a remnant of the faction survived, which refused to acquiesce in defeat until actually exterminated. On the 23d Fructidor (9th September) another attack on the Directory was planned by means of an attempted fraternisation with the troops in the camp of Grenelle. Several hundreds of an armed rabble mustered for this purpose, and proceeding to the camp, were attacked by Colonel Malo with a body of dragoons, dispersed, cut down, and captured. Inferring the necessity of a severe example to crush such inveterate hostility, the government instituted a military commission for the trial of the rebels, by which thirty-one of them were sentenced to undergo death, thirty to be transported, and twenty-five to be imprisoned. So dreadful a mutilation was successful in extinguishing the Jacobins, and they henceforth ceased to be known as a party, degenerating into isolated malcontents, brooding over cherished hallucinations, but intimidated into practical submission. Their discomfiture, however, exposed the Directory to the danger of an enterprise on the part of the Royalists. These, interpreting the refusal of the troops to fraternise with the Jacobins into proof of a royalist tendency, made overtures to Colonel Malo and to Ramel, commander of the legislative guard, which those officers forthwith disclosed to the government. The persons chiefly implicated in this manœuvre to debauch its soldiers were seized by the Directory, and after a contention with the Councils, tried by a military commission to the number of eighteen. Of these, fourteen were acquitted, and four condemned to death—namely, Brottier, Duverne de Presle, Laville-Heurnois, and Poly, accredited royalist agents; but their sentence, in consideration of revelations, was commuted to one of imprisonment for a lengthened period.

Distracted thus at the seat of government by financial destitution, and the continual machinations of two implacable but antagonist factions, the Directory had to combat an accumulation of dangers in other quarters sufficient to absorb its anxiety. Reverses had attended the armies, La Vendée had again become the theatre of a dangerous revolt, and a formidable band of emigrants had invaded Brittany. True, peace had been signed with Prussia on the 5th April 1795, and the Republic relieved from the forces of that power, whilst with Holland not only peace had been concluded, but an offensive and defensive alliance matured. The pacification with Spain likewise promised to be speedy, and in fact, after the capture of Bilboa and Vittoria by Moncey in Biscay, active negotiations were prosecuted at Basle, which shortly ripened into a treaty of peace, signed on the 12th July 1795; and the eldest reigning Bourbon formally acknowledged the French regicide republic. Still, Austria and England had redoubled their exertions, and success seemed at length about to crown their hopes, whilst the Royalist cause in the insurgent provinces wore a formidable aspect. Through the excessive stupidity with which the war had been carried on by the allies, the great insurrection in La Vendée had been suffered to be suppressed without the smallest assistance on their part. Co-operation by a British force on the west coast of France might have proved of decisive consequence in the height of the conflict, but none was attempted until the favourable moment had almost passed. During the winter of 1794-5, the surviving chiefs of the Vendéans—Charette, Stofflet, and Sapinaud—had maintained a desperate warfare against Turreau's columns; and Puisaye had infused a regular organisation into the Chouan revolt throughout Brittany, after which he had proceeded to England to solicit succours. In his absence, Canclaux was appointed to command the Republicans in La Vendée, and Hoche those in Brittany. A complete change was made in the policy of the government towards the insurgents. Instead of the relentless ferocity of the Jacobins, the opposite system of conciliation was tried, and for a time with great apparent success. A treaty was actually concluded, by which the Vendéan chiefs and the leaders of the confederated Bretons agreed to submit to the Convention in return for important concessions made by it; and such was the joy diffused through the afflicted districts by this happy consummation, that Charette made a triumphant entry into Nantes amid the acclamations of the Republicans. But it was simply a hollow truce, which the Royalists intended to break on the first opportunity; and this was presented to them by an invasion of emigrants under Puisaye, conveyed by a British squadron, and who landed in Quiberon Bay on the 27th June 1795 to the number of 10,000 men. Immediately the whole of the west and north-

west coast of France was in a ferment, and the flames of civil war burst forth again with increased fury from their temporary abatement. But Hoche was a commander of too great activity and ability to suffer the insurgents to benefit by such powerful auxiliaries, and he hastened to crush them before they were enabled to penetrate into the country, or be joined by any strong reinforcements. Driving in all the incursion parties, he hemmed the whole invading force in the peninsula of Quiberon, a narrow and sandy ridge running far into the sea. Here the emigrants began to quarrel, from the British government having failed to settle definitively the question of the commandership-in-chief, and from no prince of the blood making his appearance, who might have composed all differences of that character. This prince, the Count d'Artois, who in the silly phrasology of the old régime had become 'Monsieur,' had waited to learn the first results of the descent before intrusting his person in the perilous enterprise. Aided by their dissension, and invigorated by his own unparalleled boldness, Hoche stormed their intrenchments on the night of the 20th July, and compelled them to fly precipitately in the British boats, or to lay down their arms and surrender. Most of the prisoners taken were afterwards shot under the direction of Tallien, who was deputed by the government to consider their claim to be treated as prisoners of war—a cruelty which is aggravated by the undoubted fact of their having capitulated on the understanding that their lives were to be spared. When all was over, and the expedition utterly balked, the Count d'Artois arrived, so crowning, by his useless advent and subsequent ignominious departure, the tissue of follies which had marked the undertaking, like all others essayed by Pitt and his colleagues against France. Thus relieved from the hazard of the emigrant descent, Hoche adopted a comprehensive plan for the effectual subjugation of Brittany and La Vendée, which he executed with consummate art, combining moderation and prudence with indomitable energy; and succeeded in rooting out the last remnants of the insurrection. Even Charette himself was captured, and carried wounded into Nantes, the scene of his former triumph. He had been too inveterate and noxious an enemy to be pardoned; nor would his proud and unconquerable spirit brook to crave the boon. He was delivered up to be shot, and met his doom with the magnanimous fortitude of a true hero. His death sealed the auspicious work of pacification; and in April 1796, the cancerous sore of domestic warfare was permanently healed.

Thus finally victorious on the side of La Vendée, the fortune of the Republic was tarnished by disasters and perfidies on the banks of the Rhine. Two armies occupied the line of that river—that of the Rhine under Pichegru, and that of the Sambre and Meuse under Jourdan. Moreau had succeeded the first of these

generals in the command of the Army of Holland. The Austrians were likewise divided into two great bodies under Clairfayt and Wurmsers, who had in conjunction 170,000 men at their disposal. Apart from them was the Prince of Condé, at the head of about 3000 emigrants, indulging the design of making an irruption into France on the east simultaneously with the Royalist invasion on the west. Inactivity marked the first operations of the campaign of 1795. Luxembourg surrendered to the French in the month of June, but Mayence could be reduced only by their investing it on both sides of the river. For this purpose Jourdan had instructions to cross the Rhine at Düsseldorf; which feat he accomplished on the 6th September, whilst Pichegru was to overleap the same barrier higher up, and combine with Jourdan in the valley of the Maine for the invasion of Germany. In execution of this plan Pichegru actually surprised Mannheim, but there paused, contenting himself with throwing a detachment over the river. In truth he had opened a treasonable correspondence with the Prince of Condé, and was negotiating a betrayal of the Republic on promises of a splendid endowment of dignity and fortune. Pichegru was addicted to pleasure, and with his slender pay, in discredited assignats, he could not gratify his propensities; so, for the sake of satiating lustful appetites, he was prepared to barter the independence of his country. Sullyng thus all his previous glory, he failed to co-operate with Jourdan, who in consequence was compelled to retreat, after advancing as far as the Lahn, and recross the Rhine with disgrace. Immediately afterwards, Clairfayt, concentrating the Imperialists midway between the active Republican armies, sallied out of Mayence, and fell with irresistible weight on the blockading corps of 30,000 men under Schaal, driving it precipitately from the entire lines of its intrenchment. Jourdan and Pichegru were thus separated, whilst Clairfayt and Wurmsers were in junction, competent to overwhelm either of them. But no such grand operation occurred to the methodical minds of the Imperial commanders; they were content to expel Pichegru from the Upper Rhine, and force him back on the chain of the Vosges. With the re-conquest of Mannheim, which surrendered on the 26th November, they proposed an armistice to the French generals, who most joyfully acceded to it; and both armies went into winter quarters, the campaign terminating for the first time to the prejudice and discredit of France. This unfortunate result, however, was outbalanced by a brilliant catastrophe on the side of Italy. The season had passed in trifling successes on the part of the Piedmontese, who overmatched the Republicans in numbers, until Scherer appeared on the stage with one of the armies from Spain. The superiority then passing to the French, they used it with tremendous effect. Although Scherer was nominally generalissimo, his lieutenants

far outshone him in vigour and capacity, as they have done in fame. These were Massena, Augereau, Berthier, and Serrurier. On the morning of the 23d November they suddenly assailed the Austrians and Piedmontese under General Devins, who had imagined the campaign over, and were unprepared for an attack. By a series of brilliant movements round the common centre of Laono, they routed the allies with prodigious loss, and conquered all the frontier defences of Italy, which lay temptingly before them, inviting the inroad of the victors. But the season was too far advanced, and the Republicans were constrained to postpone the enticing enterprise, which was reserved by fate for the young captain who was soon to eclipse all rivals, and prove himself the master-spirit of the age.

Such, then, in its circumstances and its issue on the different theatres of operation, was the campaign of 1795, the least interesting that had yet occurred since the commencement of the war. Its successor was destined to bear a very different character. In 1796, the French Republic stood forth no longer in self-defence, but as the great aggressor and spoiler of Europe. It exhibited a prowess which shook all the states of Christendom to their centre. Not mere provinces it coveted, or the narrow lands of its neighbours, but whole realms and expanding principedoms. The war which had been undertaken against it in pride and presumption, became one of existence to the powers engaged in it, and unfortunate nations had to expiate in intolerable sufferings the errors of their rulers. The Republic, in its high ambition, contemplated the invasion of Italy, Germany, and Ireland. To effect these great purposes, it marshalled a vast array of forces, and selected to lead them warriors such as the world has not seen battling under one standard; they were Bonaparte, Moreau, Jourdan, and Hoche. The Italian campaign was the first to be opened. Scherer had been removed from his command for not following up with vigour the victory of Laono. The hero of the 13th Vendemiaire naturally stood high in the favour of the Directory, who after its installation had appointed him general of the Army of the Interior. He panted for employment in a higher field, and at length his ardent hopes were crowned by his nomination to command the Army of Italy. He was young to be intrusted with so important a commission, for he was not yet twenty-seven, but the genius and capacity for war he had already displayed seemed to warrant unusual confidence. Eager for great results, impatient to attain decisive solutions—a quality which strongly characterised him—he declared, on taking leave of his friends, that in a month he would either be in Milan or in Paris. He carried with him but little of that material which constitutes, it is said, the sinews of war—namely, money—since his whole stock consisted of 2000 louis-d'ors. Yet his army was in the most destitute condition perhaps ever endured by any assem-

lage of troops. Naked and famished, it had shivered through the desolate winter on the peaks of the Apennines, and with the return of spring, found little of its genial influence, or any of its hardships abated. But it was animated with a spirit of ardour and endurance unequalled among the soldiers of any land, and it possessed all the advantages of experience in difficult warfare. In number it amounted to about 40,000 men. Bonaparte reached its head-quarters at Nice on the 27th March, and made immediate preparations for attacking his enemies. These consisted of two armies—one of Piedmontese, under Colli, posted at Ceva, and comprising about 22,000 men; the other of Austrians, under Beaulieu, distributed towards Genoa, and mustering about 35,000 combatants. Together, they boasted a superb train of artillery, counting two hundred guns, whereas the Republicans had only sixty pieces of ordnance. To separate these two antagonist hosts, and annihilate them in succession, was his instant resolve. With him the strategy of war was to assume new principles and features, which, like the Revolution itself, overturned all established maxims, and by dint of which the allied armies, stiffened in the rigidity of antiquated routine, were mere automata in his passage. Beaulieu, too, was in motion, and the adversaries came into collision on the 12th April at the pass of Montenotte, on the summit of the Apennines. A fierce encounter ensued, which resulted in the total overthrow of the Austrians, who lost several thousand prisoners and slain. On the following day Bonaparte routed Colli at Millesimo, and flung him back into the plain of Piedmont. The day after, he wheeled upon Beaulieu, and defeated him with great slaughter at Dego. The Austrians and Piedmontese were thus completely severed, the first retreating on the road to Milan, the latter on that to Turin. The French had fought for three consecutive days, and gained as many great victories. Such rapidity of operations startled the methodical veterans of the old school, and wholly disconcerted them. Before pursuing the receding Imperialists, Bonaparte resolved to secure his rear by the submission of Piedmont. For this purpose he followed Colli, and catching him at Mondovi, inflicted on him another severe chastisement. Stunned by such terrible blows, the old king of Sardinia was induced to treat with the conqueror, who willingly granted him an armistice, but upon hard conditions. He insisted upon the surrender into his hands of the four great fortresses of Coni, Tortona, Alessandria, and Valenza, with all their stores and artillery, a free passage from France through Piedmont, and the conclusion of a definitive peace with the Republic. These terms being acceded to, an armistice was signed at Cherasco on the 29th April, and three weeks afterwards a treaty of peace at Paris, by which the cession to France of Savoy and Nice was formally made. Thus in a fortnight from the opening of the campaign Bonaparte had completely subdued Piedmont, and

converted it from a hostile to a friendly country. Nothing could be more fortunate for him than this prompt submission, because if the king of Sardinia, after the example of his ancestors, had held out, he must have laid siege to Turin, for which he was unprepared with the requisite siege artillery, and the whole season might have been wasted in wearisome blockades. It is a proof of the great ascendancy to be acquired by a superior audacity supported with imposing sternness; for no one has ever carried to such perfection the art of intimidation, or derived such signal advantages from it, as the young Corsican hero now leading the legions of France to victory and conquest.

Being thus secure in his rear, and his army abundantly supplied with all things needful, Bonaparte set out in pursuit of Beaulieu who had taken up a position behind the Po. This river he crossed by stratagem on the 6th May, cut an Austrian division to pieces at Fombio on the 7th, surprised their main body on the evening of the same day, and drove it headlong beyond the Adda. Hoping to intercept two divisions detached to Milan, he determined upon forcing a passage over this stream at Lodi, behind the bridge on which town the Austrians were posted, covered by formidable batteries. The operation was one of fearful hazard, for the guns swept the bridge on every side, and it could be crossed only by confronting their devastating fire. But disregarding the danger he formed a dense column of grenadiers, and impelled it at a run upon the bridge. The artillery vomiting incessant volleys of chain-shot, mowed down the men in hundreds, and when half way across they began to hesitate. Bonaparte and Lannes rushed to their head, encouraged them by their example, and succeeded in effecting the passage. The Austrian cannoneers were cut down, their guns captured, and their infantry repulsed with a loss of 2000 men. By this terrible achievement Beaulieu was struck with such consternation, that he at once abandoned the contest (exclaiming that his young opponent violated all the proper tactics of war, and ought by rights to have been beaten over and over again), and retired with all speed behind the Mincio. The spirit of the French soldiers was roused to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and with that turn for drollery which is remarkable among them, they pretended to promote their general for his good conduct, raising him to the grade of corporal. Henceforth he was known among them as the *Petit Caporal*; and this familiar title endeared him to them more than all his victories, standing him in good stead at a very critical period of his career. After the retreat of Beaulieu, all Lombardy lay at his disposal. It was necessary that he should provide for the administration of the country before advancing farther, and with that view he proceeded straightway to Milan. On the 15th May he made his triumphal entry into that capital, amid the acclamations of its inhabitants, who were overjoyed at

their release from Austrian thralldom, and hailed with transports the author of their deliverance, whom they were proud to recognise as at once their countryman and their emancipator.

It required all the wonderful talents Bonaparte possessed to manage discreetly the difficult affairs of Italy, whereof he had become so marvellously the arbiter. That fair region was then, as for many ages it had been, divided into a great number of independent states, and the people generally groaned under the sway of petty despots, who all looked to Austria as their natural supporter in misrule. Among the different communities various sentiments prevailed touching the French Revolution, according to their several stages of civilisation, but in all the chief cities of Northern Italy it was regarded with favour, and its principles invoked with ardour. This was particularly the case in Lombardy, and in the Legations subject to the execrable government of the Pope. Universally through the peninsula the minds of the Italians were in a state of effervescence, which was necessarily much increased by the tricoloured flag waving over the citadel of Milan. Hence, in addition to their actual force, the French had a powerful support in the country itself, arising partly from the patriotic desire of liberty and national independence, partly from mere discontent with existing tyrannies. But it was not expedient for Bonaparte at the time to encourage a revolutionary movement in any part of Italy; although victorious, his situation was still hazardous; a single defeat might occasion his utter ruin; and an ambiguous policy therefore suited him best, both to prevent the native powers from coalescing to endanger his rear, and to lull Venice, whom he most feared, into a false security. Besides, it might prove necessary to restore Lombardy to Austria in compensation of Belgium, and accordingly he abstained from pledging the French government to the cause either of liberty or of independence, pursuing the same course as long subsequently with regard to Poland. In the meantime he subjected the dependents of Austria in his immediate vicinity to heavy contributions. The Dukes of Parma and Modena were severally made to pay several millions of francs in specie, to furnish large quantities of corn and provender, and to deliver up, what had never hitherto been considered the legitimate spoils of war, all their most valuable pictures, which he sent to Paris, whose giddy inhabitants were already sufficiently intoxicated by the previous trophies of his exploits. He somewhat damped, too, the enthusiasm of the Milanese, by exacting a contribution of 20,000,000 francs (£800,000), and requiring immense supplies for his army. Part of the money he thus raised he transmitted to the Directory, and to Moreau on the Rhine, in order that the campaign in Germany, which was delayed through the total want of funds, and from which he expected a profitable diversion of the Austrian energies, might be forthwith commenced. Having

organised a provisional government at Milan, and established magazines and hospitals with that provident carefulness which so strikingly distinguished him, he set out on the 22d to pursue the beaten Austrians, and to settle his relations with the Republic of Venice. This famous community had fallen miserably from its high supremacy, and with the most odious of oligarchies, had sunk into a very abyss of decay and effeminacy. Yet from its ancient stores of wealth it possessed considerable military resources, and in its extensive dominion of Illyria could readily muster 50,000 mercenaries, men of the Slavonian breed, more fitted for the rude enterprises of war than the degenerate Italians. Hence it might prove a formidable auxiliary if united to Austria; and from the inherent tendencies of its government, it could not fail to have a strong leaning towards that power, and a corresponding enmity towards France. Bonaparte, accordingly, had a difficult part to play with regard to Venice: firstly, to prevent her from joining the imperial cause; secondly, to obtain from her either an actual alliance, or important concessions and favours. Having determined to occupy the line of the Adige as the most defensible barrier to Italy, he required portions of the Venetian territory, and particularly the strongholds of Peschiera and Verona. If he compelled the Austrians definitively to evacuate all Italy, Venice might be intimidated to grant all he desired; but until that event occurred, he must dissemble and temporise. Consequently he used the fairest promises upon passing her boundaries, and pleaded the example of Austria in justification of his own violation of territory. In truth Beaulieu had treacherously gained possession of Peschiera, and intrenched himself behind the Mincio, having a strong advanced guard at Borghetto. Upon this he suddenly fell impetuously with a charge of cavalry, utterly routed it, and followed it helter-skelter over the river in hot pursuit. Beaulieu judged it prudent not to await his further encounter, but retreated with his broken and dispirited forces into the Tyrol, leaving Italy in the hands of the youthful conqueror. By the last day of May the last of the Austrian host had defiled through Peschiera, and sought refuge in the natural fastnesses of the Tyrolese mountains. Bonaparte could throw off the mask he had assumed towards Venice, and punish her for her disguised hostility. It was easy for him to invent a list of grievances, and foremost in the array he put the permitted residence of the Count de Provence at Verona, which city, he alleged, had, in consequence, presumptuously styled itself the capital of France. Signifying, therefore, emphatically his high displeasure, he forthwith seized Verona and Legnago, established himself firmly on the Adige, and summoned to his presence commissioners from the Venetian senate to explain the conduct of the Republic. These he applied himself to win by a judicious mixture of cajolery and threats, and ultimately so wrought upon

them, that they concluded a convention with him, whereby, in addition to winking at the violation of neutrality, they undertook, on the part of Venice, to supply his army with everything it needed, taking the chance of future reimbursement by the French Directory. Thus, without entering upon hostilities, which must have entailed upon him the most serious embarrassments, he wrung from this imbecile government conditions almost as advantageous as if he had subdued it by force of arms, and was left at liberty quietly to sit down before Mantua, the principal fortress of Lombardy, and the last possession of the Austrians in Italy.

Having thus established his supremacy in the north, Bonaparte turned his eyes to the potentates in the south, whom it was the especial desire of the Directory to visit with exemplary chastisement. These were the Pope and Naples, both of whom had given numerous instances of inveterate hatred towards France. As the Austrians could not return in force in less than two months, he might employ that interval in humbling two such determined foes of the great Republic. Leaving the bulk of his army on the Adige accordingly, he took a flying column of 8000 men, and advanced with rapidity on the ancient capital of the world. The pontiff at once succumbed; he consented to pay a subsidy of 21,000,000 francs, acknowledged the independence of the Legations of Bologna and Ferrara, and delivered up a hundred pictures or statues, the masterpieces of art in St Peter's and the Vatican. The king of Naples on his part agreed to secede from the coalition, and to cultivate the most peaceful relations with the new government of France. The Archduke of Tuscany gave to the French general a magnificent entertainment at Florence, although he had just reason to resent an unwarrantable outrage committed at Leghorn, whither Bonaparte had suddenly directed an invading corps, and confiscated all the British merchandise stored in the warehouses of that city. Genoa likewise made its submission, and dismissed the Imperial ambassador, completing the range of subjugation throughout the whole peninsula. All this was accomplished in twenty days, so paramount was the ascendancy wielded by the Republican general through the united influence of his determination, promptitude, and prowess. By the end of June he was enabled to return to his head-quarters at Roverbella, near Mantua.

The Austrian cabinet meanwhile was making vast preparations for wresting from his grasp his splendid conquest. The veteran Wurmser was recalled from the Rhine with 30,000 of his best troops, which being joined with Beaulieu's wrecks and some fresh levies, made his disposable force 60,000 men. Bonaparte's entire army counted at the utmost 45,000 men, of whom 10,000 were engaged in the siege of Mantua. The plan of campaign devised by the Aulic Council contemplated nothing less than the

complete destruction of the audacious Republicans. By the three roads debouching from the Tyrol into the plain of Lombardy, they were to be assailed in front on the Adige, in flank between the Adige and the Mincio, in rear from behind the Mincio by turning the Lake of Guarda. Wurmser was to conduct in person the principal operation of forcing the defensive line of the Adige in front and flank at the head of 40,000 men, whilst Quasdanovich was to round the Lake of Guarda with the remaining 20,000. On the 29th July all the French posts at the outlets of the Tyrolese gorges were surprised and carried. Sauret was driven from Salo, Massena from La Corona and Rivoli, and the bridges of Verona occupied. Thus the French were threatened to be enveloped on all sides, and their situation was most alarming. Bonaparte, for the first time, called a council of war, at which all the generals, with the exception of Augereau, gave their voices for an immediate retreat upon Milan. Bonaparte listened, and reserved his own opinion; but in the night he formed a resolution which has redounded more to his fame as a consummate warrior than almost any achievement of his life. He had been besieging Mantua for two months, and was on the point of taking it. As the lesser sacrifice, he determined to forego the tempting acquisition, and concentrate all his forces behind the Mincio, towards the point of the Lake of Guarda, whence he proposed to fall in succession on the two advancing masses of the Austrians, the one coming from behind, the other from before. This purpose he at once carried into effect, and on the 31st July retrograded rapidly upon Quasdanovich, whom he overwhelmed at Salo and Lonato, and drove back into the mountains. Then hastening to meet Wurmser, who had in person diverged with 15,000 men to raise the siege of Mantua—a digression which cost him dear—he encountered his lieutenants Bayalitsch and Liptai, whom, on the 3d August, after marching three days incessantly, he cut asunder, and thrust, with the loss of several thousand men, partly into the gorges beyond the Lake of Guarda, and partly upon Wurmser advancing from Mantua, where that commander had unwisely consumed a day in making a triumphal entry. With Bonaparte the waste of time was always fatal, for none knew how to profit by it with such decisive effect. On the evening of the 4th, the two principal armies deployed in presence of each other on the plain of Castiglione; but by mutual consent the battle, which was to decide the fate of Italy, was deferred until the following day. The French were inferior in number, but exhilarated by their successes; and although exhausted with fatigue, were eager for the coming fray. The Austrians, nevertheless, proved stubborn adversaries; and it was only by a successful feint of Bonaparte that the fortune of the day was eventually decided. Wurmser having outstretched himself in the vain hope of effecting a com-

munication with Quasdanovich, whom he still expected to join him, was permitted by Bonaparte to prosecute the manœuvre until he had sufficiently weakened his line, when he flung Augereau and Massena upon him, who bewildered him by the impetuosity of their assault. Fearing, in his turn, to be caught in the rear by Serrurier, who was coming up by Cavriano, he gave the signal of retreat, and withdrew from the field of battle. His loss was not severe, and the French were so wearied that they were quite unable to improve their victory; but his army was demoralised by the startling succession of reverses it had experienced; and after recrossing the Mincio, he quietly retired into the fastnesses of the Tyrol, whence he had so lately emerged, singing by anticipation the pæans of triumph. In this short campaign of six days the Austrians had lost 20,000 men. Never had soldiers undergone such excessive fatigues as the French, or fought with more indomitable valour. Bonaparte himself took scarcely a moment's repose during the whole time, and five horses perished beneath him from sheer exhaustion.

Not satisfied, however, with this repulse of Wurmser from the plain of Italy, Bonaparte resolved to pursue him into the mountains, and after giving his troops a short respite, penetrated into the Tyrol by all the three routes which traverse it. Wurmser himself having been reinforced from the interior of Austria, resumed the offensive at the same time, but upon a different plan; and the respective schemes of the two commanders to destroy each other placed them in a very extraordinary position. Wurmser now proposed to defend the Tyrol with 20,000 men under Davidovich, whilst he poured through the valley of the Brenta, surprised the line of the Adige, and cooped up his adversary between two fires in the narrow defiles of the mountains. The project was not a bad one in theory, but in its practical execution he again divided his forces injudiciously. Bonaparte was still too rapid for him in his evolutions. On the 3d and 4th of September, by a series of incredible exploits, the latter forced Davidovich in all his apparently impregnable positions, captured the whole of his artillery, cut to pieces 4000 of his men, took other 4000 prisoners, and entered Trent, the capital of the Tyrol, on the evening of the 5th. Here he learned Wurmser's irruption down the Brenta, and he instantly resolved to follow him. Thus the French were in the wake of the Austrians when invading Italy from their own country. It was almost inevitable that the one or the other should be exterminated, both cut off as they were from their natural communications. Upon celerity alone it depended which should perish in the pitfall. Bonaparte set out from Trent on the morning of the 6th, and plunging into the fearful ravines of the route, marched two days without halting, covering in that space twenty leagues of ground. In his eager-

ness he outstripped his staff, and bivouacked on the night of the 8th alone amid the advanced guard, sharing rations with a common soldier. On the 9th he discovered Wurmser drawn up around Bassano upon both banks of the Brenta. He instantly assaulted him, and the Austrians were so disconcerted by his superior audacity that they made but a feeble resistance. Bassano was carried by Massena at the point of the bayonet, and the Imperialists being thus divided, had no resource but in immediate flight. Those on the left bank of the Brenta retired in disorder under Quasdanovich in the direction of Friuli; Wurmser with the remainder bent his steps to the Adige, hoping to find a refuge behind the ramparts of Mantua. Fortunately for him Legnago was unguarded, and he was enabled to cross that river; but severely harassed by the French cavalry under Murat, it was with difficulty he succeeded in throwing himself with about 14,000 men into Mantua, where he was forthwith closely invested. Thus the issue of this last attempt to recover Italy by the Austrians was the loss of the Tyrol in addition, and the complete extinction of their army—slaughtered or captured at Bassano, expelled from the theatre of war, or shut up in a solitary fortress far away from succour. The French had won trophies sufficient to feed the vanity of a people the most insatiable of military glory, and their definitive possession of Italy seemed assured.

But if the pride of France could luxuriate in the stupendous achievements of her arms in Italy, she was doomed to be deeply mortified by the result of other enterprises on which her lust was even more keenly excited. To cripple England, or even to wound her severely, was equivalent to fifty victories on the continent; for in the impetus and subsidies of England lay the whole vitality of the coalition, and the main impediment to undisputed supremacy in Europe. Besides, animosity was more fiercely aroused against England than against any other power; and unfortunately with good reason, since France could not but resent with more than the mere rage incident to war the insulting and furious denunciations directed against her by the British ministers in Parliament, and their principal supporters throughout the country.* Hence the invasion of Ireland was regarded with intense interest, and the most sanguine anticipations formed of its success. Preparations for attempting it had been long in progress at Brest, whence the expedition was to sail. The naval force employed was to consist of twenty-five ships of the line, twenty frigates, and a great number of transports, carrying in all 25,000 soldiers. These were to be landed in Bantry Bay, and, according to the promises of Irish emissaries, joined by the whole Catholic population of Ireland. Hoche was appointed to command

* Burke wrote his 'Thoughts on a Regicide Peace' at this period; a work whose insane violence causes a shudder at the present day.

the expedition; his fame and the magnitude of the effort threw the British government and nation into the greatest alarm. The disaffected state of the Irish people was notorious, and if a large body of French veterans once landed, the most disastrous consequences might ensue. Still, reliance was placed in the naval superiority of Great Britain, and it was supposed that no French fleet could put to sea in face of the English cruisers, who kept constant watch on their harbours. This proved a fallacy, and England became indebted for her safety to the stormy element in which she rides. Under cover of a mist, the French fleet sailed out of Brest harbour on the 16th December, but was immediately afterwards dispersed by a tempest. Hoche himself was in a frigate with the admiral, Morard de Galles, and got completely separated from the rest of the squadron. Admiral Bouvet, however, second in command, contrived to keep most of the ships together, and after a boisterous passage of eight days, he cast anchor at the appointed place of rendezvous, having with him 6000 of the troops. These he made an effort to land, but it was found impossible, from the rough state of the weather; and seeing no appearance of the commander-in-chief, he resolved to return to Brest, which he shortly reached without accident or molestation. Hoche arrived soon afterwards in Bantry Bay, and finding his fleet gone, had no alternative but to follow it, and likewise regain the coast of France. His return was attended with great danger, and he narrowly escaped capture. But only one of his ships actually fell a prey to the British navy; another had foundered in the storm. Thus were the eager hopes of the French relative to this great expedition finally destroyed, but, it must be confessed, with many circumstances of consolation. The practicability of evading the British cruisers, and of effectuating an invasion, had been demonstrated; and as in the case of the Spanish Armada, the winds of Heaven only had interposed to rescue England from a struggle on her own shores for an existence. Upon so accidental a palladium it was clear she could not implicitly depend, and hence it was inferred that she might yet be struck to the heart on a point she vainly judged invulnerable.

On the side of Germany, too, the star of the Republic sank in the deepest gloom. Carnot had devised a plan for the invasion of the empire on the same vicious principle as that followed by the Aulic Council for the reconquest of Italy. He divided the Republicans into two armies—one under Moreau, and the other under Jourdan—sent them across the Rhine at distant points, and directed them upon a place of junction in the valley of the Danube by separate routes, far asunder, and parted by mountains and forests. An able enemy, therefore, concentrating his forces between them, could overwhelm either at his discretion; and

then taking the other in flank or rear, probably compel it to surrender. This is precisely what the Archduke Charles—who now, happily for Austria, commanded her armies—essayed to accomplish and partly effected. When Jourdan was sufficiently committed by an advance nearly to the frontier of Bohemia, whilst Moreau was engaged in debouching from the valley of the Necker into that of the Danube, the archduke wheeled upon the former, drove him back, completely routed him at Wurtzburg on the 3d September, and chased him flying in disorder to the Lahn. After thus disposing of Jourdan, he attempted to intercept Moreau by getting behind him on the Necker; but that general was too wary to become his victim. The moment he learned Jourdan's disaster, Moreau determined to retreat, dangerously compromised as he was in the heart of Bavaria; but divining the archduke's intention, he ascended the valley of the Upper Danube, retiring in excellent order, although pursued by Latour, who had been left to keep him in check, and passed through the fearful defile of the Hüllenthal (Valley of Hell), which led him at once to the Rhine, which he reached in safety on the 12th October. To effect a difficult retreat in presence of an active adversary is justly deemed on a parallel with the greatest achievements in war, and to this kind of operation some generals owe their only fame. For the admirable judgment and coolness, therefore, with which Moreau conducted his army out of its perilous predicament, he has earned a high reputation among military commanders. But the glory of a skilful retreat is negative in the eyes of the vulgar, and could not compensate for the total failure of the campaign. The archduke had proved himself an overmatch for warriors of the second order, and divided with the conqueror of Italy the attention and applause of the world.

Fresh astounding feats by this same conqueror came to cheer the heart of France under her heavy disappointments. Austria was not yet content finally to relinquish Italy, and she made another desperate effort to recover it. Straining all the resources of her mighty empire, she collected once more a numerous army, and intrusted it to the care of Marshal Alvinzy, a veteran in whom she reposed entire confidence. The plan of operations proposed was to dislodge the French from the Tyrol, and assail them at the same time from Friuli upon the Brenta and the Adige. For the first purpose, Davidovich had 20,000 men assigned to him; for the second, Alvinzy mustered upwards of 40,000. Through the neglect, and perhaps jealousy of the Directory, Bonaparte had been very scantily recruited, and his forces were greatly diminished in number. He counted at the utmost 12,000 men in the Tyrol under Vaubois, and 20,000 in the plain on the Brenta and the Adige. With such a discrepancy of force, he might well despair of retaining his conquest; and he wrote to the

Directory in the most angry as well as desponding terms, preparing it for the climax of calamity. To his own soldiers, however, he still spoke in the language of confidence, and to the powers of Italy he maintained the same imperious tone. Alvinzy commenced his movement on the 1st of November. On the 6th, his approach was arrested by Massena in a fierce engagement on the Brenta; but the defeat of Vaubois, and the rapid advance of Davidovich down the Upper Adige, compelled Bonaparte to make a rapid retreat on Verona, to prevent his being intercepted. Thence he flew to Vaubois, rallied his broken troops, to whom he administered a memorable rebuke, on the strong position of Rivoli, and left him to stop Davidovich at all hazards for a few days. Hastening back to Verona, he attacked Alvinzy on the 12th in the position he had taken up on the heights of Caldiero, about three leagues from Verona. The rain fell in torrents during the whole day, and rendered it impossible for him to bring his artillery into play, whilst that of the Austrians, being previously intrenched, operated with deadly effect. He was repulsed on all sides with great loss, and driven back into Verona at length defeated. His situation seemed perfectly hopeless. It was out of his power to dislodge Alvinzy by a direct attack, and he expected every moment to have Davidovich thundering on his rear. By some audacious experiment on the caution and timidity of his aged opponent could he alone avert a fatal catastrophe. To fall back on Milan or Mantua was utter ruin; he must stand his ground or perish. In the darkness of the early night on the 14th he led his troops noiselessly out of Verona, but not in the direction of the enemy; with grief stirring them to tears, the soldiers perceived they were marching on the road to Milan. But soon they diverged to the left, and by daybreak found themselves still on the Adige, at Ronco, where a bridge of boats enabled them to repass the river. Here extensive morasses stretched on every side, and through them ran two narrow causeways, one leading up the Adige to the road between Caldiero and Verona, the other leading to the same road behind Caldiero through the village of Arcola, and over a stream called the Alpon, which was crossed by a bridge. By pushing along this latter causeway, he could gain the rear of Alvinzy, whilst by occupying the former, he protected Verona in case of an attack. Another advantage he possessed from these causeways was, that on them his great inferiority in number was of little consequence, since by columns alone the combat must be waged. Nothing, therefore, could exceed the profound sagacity with which he had selected the ground of his operation.

A slight obstacle marred the chief purpose of his scheme. Augereau encountered a body of Croats with cannon at the bridge of Arcola, who maintained such a vigorous fire, that

though he charged in person at the head of his grenadiers, he was obliged to recoil; and thus Alvinzy was apprised of his danger in time to obviate it. He immediately despatched troops and artillery along both causeways, and then a conflict ensued between the grenadiers of the two armies unparalleled in ancient or modern warfare. Massena on one dike confronted Provera; Augereau on the other battled against Mitrowski. First the French rushed impetuously on the Austrians, broke their columns, hewed them down, threw them headlong into the marsh, and routed them with howls of exultation over the bridge. But here they are themselves arrested; volleys of grape salute them such as none can withstand; they pause; they turn and flee. Augereau, raging with fury, seizes a standard in his hand, calls aloud upon his soldiers to follow him, and advances, waving his sword aloft, to the middle of the bridge. Four generals fall around him, and are borne to the rear. The soldiers cannot face the fire, and again recoil, carrying their leader with them. Bonaparte has observed the strife with anguish. If he can but force the bridge of Arcola before Alvinzy has moved the bulk of his army from Caldiero, he will inflict upon him a deadly blow. At all hazards it must be won. Galloping along the causeway, he throws himself among the grenadiers, crouching behind the dike to escape the fire. 'Are you still the conquerors of Lodi?' he cries to them. 'Arise, and follow your general!' He snatches a flag from the hands of a standard-bearer, and advances amid a storm of balls and bullets. The soldiers follow him with loud shouts; Muiron, his aide-de-camp, shields him with his body, and falls riddled with wounds; he reaches the fatal bridge; but still the sweeping volleys appal the courage of his men; they grow faint before the carnage, and once more recede. Bonaparte is forcibly dragged into the retreat, and with the remnant of his shattered column charged by the exhilarated Austrians, who scatter death with a merciless hand. Together with several of his soldiers he is thrust into the marsh, where he sinks up to the waist, and lies concealed whilst the Austrians trample past him. But his presence is soon missed, and anxious cries are raised: 'Where is the general? Rescue the general!' Maddened by the danger of their chief, the French are armed with the strength and fierceness of lions: with a desperate lunge they transfix their foes—scatter and overwhelm them. Bonaparte is drawn out of the water, and retires to Ronco, whither he calls in his two columns; and so closes the sanguinary day of the 15th November.

With the rising of the sun on the 16th the combatants renew the fight. During the entire day they contend on the causeways with boiling wrath. No mercy is shown, no quarter given; thousands perish on both sides, killed, wounded, and drowned. Darkness falls on the scene of carnage, only to be dispelled for its

repetition. On the third day Bonaparte prepares to render the result decisive. He allows his soldiers to feign a retreat, allures the Austrians into a pursuit, and attacks them from an ambuscade with a dreadful slaughter. He feels strong enough now to deploy into the plain, and moves accordingly with all his forces over the Alpon. To deceive the enemy, he sends twenty-five men of the corps called the *Guides* into a thicket on his right, with instructions to sound a charge of trumpets when the contest is at its height. Then the two armies engage in close combat; but suddenly Alvinzy hears a loud blast on his left, which he takes to herald an irruption of cavalry. At the same moment news is brought him that a hostile body is appearing in his rear; which is the truth, for the garrison of Legnago has been ordered to debouch in that quarter. Fearing some fatal movement on his flank and rear, he gives the signal of retreat, and at last yields the victory to his indomitable adversary. He retires on the Brenta, having lost half his troops in the fortnight's campaign, but still not so completely vanquished as his predecessors had been. After his retreat, it was an easy matter to drive Davidovich back into the Tyrol; but Bonaparte was too enfeebled to follow either him or Alvinzy. He was obliged to content himself with re-occupying La Corona and Rivoli, and the line of the Adige as far as Porto-Legnago, thus deriving no material profit from his wonderful performances beyond the pregnant fact of demonstrating his invincibility against any preponderance of odds. Vast, however, as was the renown he gained by his conduct upon this occasion, it must be allowed that Alvinzy was fettered by his instructions from Vienna, which enjoined him to observe the utmost circumspection; otherwise, if he had boldly advanced upon Verona when Bonaparte evacuated it, he must have effected a junction with Davidovich, relieved Wurmser from his bondage in Mantua, and obtained an overwhelming superiority in the open plains of Lombardy. The prior successes of the young Republican had inspired such awe, that his enemies were paralysed in their faculties, and shuddered at the idea of initiating an effective offensive. Thus their courage was smitten with an indefinable apprehension, and they yielded to a prestige which neutralised all their superincumbent myriads.

Unconquerable tenacity has ever been, from the great founder of the dynasty, characteristic of the princes of the House of Hapsburg. It has been almost their solitary virtue, as it has proved also the principal source of their colossal growth. The Emperor Francis partook largely this hereditary quality of his family. Notwithstanding there had been already four campaigns during the year for the possession of Lombardy, he was still resolved to adventure another. He was the more emboldened in this determination by the exhortations of the Pope, who, believing

the French unable to withstand Alvinzy, had broken his truce with Bonaparte, and declared open war against him. Troops were drawn from the remotest frontiers of Galicia, Transylvania, and Hungary; the citizens of Vienna spontaneously offered 4000 recruits, and the empress embroidered the colours they were to bear with her own hands. A spirit of enthusiasm animated the whole population of Austria, ever hitherto distinguished for devoted loyalty; and confident hopes were indulged that with one more effort the redoubtable Corsican would be at last extinguished. The system of operations was again altered. This time Alvinzy, with 40,000 men, was to descend the valley of the Upper Adige through the gorges of the Tyrol, whilst Provera, with 20,000, was to push on the Lower Adige, cross it, relieve Wurmser, and open a communication with the army of the Pope. These forces, although so unwisely divided, were far superior to those of Bonaparte, who, despite the reinforcements he had received since the battle of Arcola, could not bring more than 30,000 men into the field without raising the siege of Mantua, which would have let Wurmser out with 14,000 men on his rear. Still he possessed the advantage, so inestimable in his hands, of occupying a central position between the two armies of his enemy, and of being enabled to concentrate his strength against either. The great fatigues he had undergone, the perpetual anxieties which racked his mind, had preyed visibly on his constitution; and at all times slim and short in figure, he now presented the appearance of an almost ghastly emaciation. His cheeks were wan and hollow, his limbs shrunken, his head bent upon his breast, and such was his physical debility that he could scarcely sit on horseback; his eyes alone retained their sparkling intelligence. His mind, too, was full of all its native energy; yet a painful lassitude seemed to mark his expression, and gave rise to rumours of his declining health, which inspired hopes or fears as they reached foes or friends. His only comfort and relaxation was in the society of his wife, the charming Josephine Beauharnais, whom he had married before leaving Paris, and whom he now called for consolation to his head-quarters. To her he was devotedly attached, and in her company he delighted to unbend from the arduous thoughts which were ever revolving in his brain. The applause and honours heaped upon him by his countrymen likewise must have tended to gratify him, and to soothe the irritable susceptibility of his nature. The legislative councils had repeatedly passed resolutions that he and the Army of Italy had deserved well of the country; and with reference to the late affair of Arcola, had specially decreed in addition, with noble Republican simplicity, that the standards borne by him and Augereau on that day should be given to them to be preserved in their families as perpetual heirlooms.

Alvinzy and Provera took the field simultaneously on the 12th January 1797, and attacked the French outposts along the entire line of the Adige. Joubert, who had replaced Vaubois in the Tyrol, was too weak to maintain his ground, and fell back on the plateau of Rivoli, where he was enabled to oppose an obstinate resistance. This plateau formed naturally a very strong position. In front it was approached only by a steep spiral road ascending from the margin of the river, there lined to the very edge by precipitous rocks, and on the left it was closed by an amphitheatre of heights, the chain of Montebaldo, which was accessible only to infantry. On the right, it overhung the stream of the Adige, and commanded by its fire the road running along its farther bank. As soon as Bonaparte became aware that the principal effort of the Austrians was to be made by the Tyrol, he started in the evening of the 13th from Verona with Massena's division for Rivoli, and ordered Rey, posted at Dezenzano, at the extremity of the Lake of Garda, to hasten on the same point. He himself reached Rivoli at two in the morning, preceding by some hours the arrival of Massena with his corps. A sublime scene offered itself to his view. The moon shone with singular brightness through the pure mountain atmosphere, rarefied, moreover, by a keen frost. The rapid river rolled far beneath him through the precipitous defile, sparkling like molten silver; whilst above and around him, on the crests and slopes of the lofty heights, stretching in a wide semicircle, burned the innumerable fires of the Austrian bivouack. From their extent, he judged with accuracy that Alvinzy had at least 40,000 men. His own soldiers occupied the level plateau, all but the sentries buried in deep sleep after two days of continual fighting. He instantly conceived the plan on which he should fight the battle, discerning that the condition of success lay in his preventing the junction of the infantry on Montebaldo with the cavalry and artillery to ascend the spiral road of Incanale. He took his measures accordingly, and before daybreak, aroused his soldiers from their heavy slumbers. He had scarcely 15,000 men at the first commencement of the action, which began at nine in the morning. So certain did Alvinzy deem victory, that he detached Lusignan with a whole division to get into the rear of the French, and intercept their retreat on Verona. His confidence was shared by his soldiers, who cheered lustily as they moved down the heights to overwhelm, as they thought, the handful of their enemies. In the beginning, both wings of the French army were worsted, and all seemed lost, when Bonaparte galloped to the village of Rivoli, where Massena's troops were snatching a moment's rest after their night's march; and taking two regiments, led them into the thick of the fight. He restored the battle on the left, but the great danger which he apprehended

was happening on the extreme right: the Austrian cavalry and artillery were appearing on the plateau, and extending to join their infantry. Now was the critical moment; in ten minutes the fate of his army would be sealed. He directed all his light artillery and the chief part of his cavalry on the outlet of the road, and Joubert wheeled on the same point. With a united effort they all charged together, and breaking the head of the Austrian column, drove it back, and at length threw it precipitately down the steep acclivity. Dreadful was the confusion that ensued. The fugitives tumbled among their comrades toiling up behind; the artillery and cavalry fell inextricably intermingled; the French pointed their batteries down the road, and swept it with murderous volleys. Thus deprived of artillery and cavalry, the Austrian infantry lost heart, and almost immediately began to recoil. Soon their retreat degenerated into a flight, as the French pressed them closely, and they sought refuge in the mountains by dispersing. The victors pursued with remorseless fury; and both in the valley of the Adige and on the Montebaldo, cut down the flying enemy, and took many thousands prisoners. Lusignan was caught in the trap designed for Bonaparte, and had no resource but to lay down his arms and capitulate. His division consisted of 4000 men. The victory was one of the most complete ever gained, especially with such a disparity of numbers; the Austrian army was literally annihilated. Yet it must be confessed that this extraordinary result was mainly owing to the superior individual prowess of the French soldiers; the Austrians, many of whom were mere recruits, and the whole of sudden heterogeneous composition, were clearly incompetent to withstand them in the rude shock of close encounter. Against more approved warriors, Bonaparte could scarcely have failed to meet a premature doom on the celebrated plateau of Rivoli.

Leaving Joubert to follow up the pursuit, Bonaparte himself instantly set out with Massena for the Lower Adige, to crush his remaining adversary Provera. The latter was already on the point of reaching Mantua, from which Bonaparte was fourteen leagues distant. Inspiring his troops by his own example with a superhuman endurance, he arrived, however, in the nick of time on the afternoon of the 16th. Enveloping the unfortunate Austrian on all sides, and impelling on him with a resistless momentum Augereau, Massena, Victor, and Miollis, he handled him so unmercifully, that he was fain to lay down his arms and sue for quarter at the head of 6000 survivors. Wurmser at the same time was repulsed by Serrurier in a sortie he attempted; and perceiving all prospect of relief foreclosed, having eaten up his last pickled horse, he surrendered to the conqueror the great fortress of Mantua. Bonaparte granted him very honourable terms, and treated him with a delicacy and generosity which has extorted

for him the reluctant praise of even the most prejudiced opponents. Denying his vanity the gratification of a personal triumph over the vanquished marshal, he left to Serrurier the charge of presiding at the evacuation, and hastened away in person to chastise the refractory Pope. The papal army was neither in strength nor in quality able for a moment to compete with him, and he dissolved it almost at a blow. The Directory, partaking the revolutionary detestation of priests, was desirous of wholly subverting the Roman government; but Bonaparte, free from bigotry of any kind, and judging truly the danger of kindling a religious war in his rear, resolved to disappoint this wish, and accorded to the Pope more favourable conditions than he might reasonably expect from his combined hostility and perfidy. He fined him 15,000,000 francs in addition to the 15,000,000 still unpaid of the first contribution, and took from him, besides, the province of Romagna, which, with the Legations and Modena, he erected into a Republic, called, in reference to the Po, the Cispadan Republic. He delayed yet to give a definitive organisation to Lombardy, as, until peace were finally wrung from Austria, he knew not what combinations of territory or political constitution might become expedient. In the meantime he rivetted his dominion over the whole peninsula, and awed all its potentates into his submissive allies. Venice alone gave him uneasiness, from her evident enmity and secret preparations; but to guard against her sudden revolt, when he advanced, as he proposed, in the spring towards Vienna, he enrolled several battalions of Italian patriots, and caused them to be diligently instructed in the discipline of war. By her timid and temporising policy between the great belligerents, Venice incurred the animosity of both, and in the end reaped the invariable reward of vacillation and duplicity.

Such was the ever-memorable campaign of 1796, which first introduced to Europe its future master, and raised France to a pinnacle of greatness from which she fell only when deprived of the arm that had exalted her.

CHAPTER XI.

REVOLUTION OF THE 18TH FRUCTIDOR—PEACE OF CAMPO-FORMIO—
EXPEDITION TO EGYPT—CONQUEST OF ITALY BY SUWARROFF—RETURN
OF BONAPARTE—JANUARY 1797 TO NOVEMBER 1799.

France had now vindicated her revolution in the eyes of the world: the blessing of Providence was upon it, according to the

vulgar if not profane interpretation of triumphs vouchsafed to the spillers of blood. At its dismal crimes men had stood aghast, and imprecated; at its victories they trembled, but admired. Its fiercest enemies were compelled to hold their breath, and admit the fulfilment of an event they had affected to deride, and of which they had said in the fulness of their supercilious vanity 'This is an extravagance we will not tolerate.' The spirit of democracy had arisen from its lowly birth and rebuked the antagonist elements, until, by dint of superior physical embodiment, it overmastered and routed them all. Pitt himself hid his face, and crouched before it. He had brought his country to the very brink of an abyss, bottomless in the vista of ruin, and amid a universal groan of fear and lamentation had sent an envoy to Paris, Lord Malmesbury, to sue for peace. This the Directory, having no faith in his sincerity, inflated, moreover, by prosperity and by the full persuasion of a successful descent upon the coast of Ireland refused to grant; and after a useless sojourn of some weeks in the metropolis, on the 19th December 1796 it ordered his messenger in terms of insulting contumely, to quit France within forty-eight hours. So scornful a rejection of his contrite advances served for the moment the purposes of Pitt, since, albeit deeply humbled in his proud heart, he obeyed the necessity of submission with an unwilling grace, and still harboured furtive hopes of revenge. The susceptibility of England was keenly excited by the audacious affront of the French Directory: the miscalculations, mischances, and false prophecies of her minister were all forgotten, and in her anger she armed him with the might of a national determination to prosecute the contest, and strain every sinew for the redemption of outraged honour. Thus opinion, hitherto divided, was united in favour of the war; opposition was silenced in the stress of danger and the burst of patriotism; and Pitt expressed almost the general feeling when he said in parliament, with reference to the renewal of the negotiation, 'I hope there is not a hand in his majesty's councils which would sign the proposals, that there is not a heart in the House that would sanction the measure, nor an individual in the British dominions who would serve as courier on the occasion.' Yet so apt was this celebrated man to take counsel of his passions rather than of his judgment, that within six months he was reduced to the humiliating process of swallowing this boastful claptrap, and finding in himself the hand and heart, and in the identical envoy Lord Malmesbury the messenger, to repeat and carry the discarded overtures.

Towards other powers, however, the French Directory evinced a more conciliatory and less arrogant spirit. Previous to the last struggle in Italy, when the situation of Bonaparte seemed so full of hazard, it had sought to open conferences with Austria for the adjustment of a peace; but the project had failed, both through

the opposition of the French general, and through the reluctance of the imperial cabinet to negotiate whilst in the predicament of a conquered power. With Spain it had been more successful. Although a Bourbon prince, claiming a common ancestry with the Bourbons of France, occupied the throne of that country, who must have viewed the execution of Louis XVI. with an emotion far more intense than any other in Europe, yet he was, after agreeing to an accommodation with the Republic, induced to extend his relations with it, and conclude with it a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance. This of course involved war with England, which the Spanish monarch accordingly declared against her on the 2d October 1796 in a very acrimonious manifesto, wherein he charged her with the grossest offences against the laws of nations and the wellbeing of mankind. By this revival of the famous 'family compact' between France and Spain, against which England had so often contended both in remonstrances and in arms, she found herself excluded from the coast of nearly one-half of Europe, stretching, with the brief interval of Portugal, from the outlet of the Zuyder Zee to the shores of the Adriatic. Well might her people begin to quake and doubt the foresight or capacity of their rulers, now that all the States, save one, originally forming the coalition against France, had not only seceded from the combination, but had entered with the foe into hostile leagues against their former ally and bountiful subvener. The history of the world fails to present a similar instance of so rapid, strange, and complete a vicissitude.

Still, with all their vast exterior successes, the Directors sat on an unstable and uneasy throne. On the one hand domestic factions threatened to tear them from their elevation, and sink the Republic in a revived monarchy or an anarchical Jacobinism; on the other the leaders of armies gave them umbrage, for on them their tenure of power seemed mainly to depend, and particularly he who threw the chiefest lustre upon their government. It was impossible that a reign of mere moderation should be established upon the convulsed fabrics of a society razed from its very foundations; the influence of reason, or even of experience, is of no avail, since the passions engendered in civil strife can be extinguished only in the grave of the generation. Hence from the first the position of the Directory was precarious, and almost anomalous, inasmuch as it rested upon the narrowest possible basis—that small neutral ground occupied by an enlightened impartiality between the raging floods of wild fanaticism. The transition from a state of anarchy to a settled government must be perhaps always marked by such a fatality, and nothing but the most dexterous poising between opposing factions, or an ability and firmness surpassing the average standard of humanity, can build up an institution capable of being sustained, much less perpetuated. It is very well said

that all governments are compromises between the primitive license of man and his rational bondage under civilisation; but until the end of the earth, the question will not be set at rest what is the form of this compromise which is most consistent with reason, justice, and expediency. By some every superiority is viewed as a usurpation, and they advocate a political, if not a social equality; to others, every popular franchise is abhorrent, and in their dread of democracy they preach the doctrine of slavery under one or more masters. These represent the two extremes of the political system, and between them fluctuate innumerable opinions how best the fabric of society may be adjusted and cemented. The French Revolution had commenced with the despotism of royalty, had developed in its course numberless theories, and had eventually settled in the unlimited sway of the populace. Thus in the course of little more than four years, France had jumped from one extremity of the ladder to the other, passing through, in her rapid transit, many metamorphoses, and testing sundry of the formulas which the wit of man has devised wherein to mould the complicated machine called 'government.' In this progress of change and experiment, precipitation and violence had been always predominant; a greater amount of misery had been laid upon the nation than any perhaps ever suffered; at no period had any real liberty existed, but for the most part a crusade of extermination by one portion of the community against the other. So terrible a conflict, so devastating a convulsion, produced, as it drew to a termination, weariness, disgust, and exhaustion, insomuch that the universal cry became for 'peace' and 'order,' no matter under what form they might be secured. Then a body of men—who by tacit consent were understood to exercise the sovereignty of the State, but who in fact held no authority whatever for the supreme arbitrament they arrogated—took upon themselves the difficult task of adumbrating a new 'compromise,' and they gave to France the directorial constitution. But by a singular, although not unnatural consequence of past events, it happened that this body of men had ceased to represent in reality any but a small fraction of the general population, notwithstanding they had been originally elected under the substantial fiat of a universal suffrage. This resulted from the modifications of opinion under which these men had passed in their experience of legislation, whereby they had been fused at last into congruity, but one which the nation was very far from participating. This congruity lay in the determination to uphold the Revolution and the Republic, but upon principles of moderation and order, conducing to the restoration of general tranquillity and happiness. The factions of Jacobins and Royalists would neither of them admit such a solution of the great problem at issue, and each of them in its turn revolted against it, and attempted to prevent

even its trial. In this situation of things the Convention, the body of men alluded to, resolved to adopt the very bold step of suspending the right of election under the new constitution, and conferred on two-thirds of themselves the function of representatives of the people by their own arbitrary vote. Hence the directorial government rested rather on a sort of oligarchical than on a popular basis, although it had been approved by the great majority of the primary assemblies when the desire for anything that gave promise of stability and quietness was at its height. Even then the National Guard of Paris had risen in insurrection, and provoked the bloody catastrophe of the 13th Vendémiaire. As this desire, however, became less urgent, it gave place to the ever-reverting one for change; and the legitimacy of the directorial government was freely canvassed and denied in a multitude of newspapers propagated industriously throughout the country. These were chiefly Royalist organs, since the remnants of the ultra-revolutionary party were for the time disposed to look favourably upon the Directory, and they produced a prodigious effect upon the public mind. The Royalist agencies, too, laboured assiduously in their several spheres; and the Clichy Club at Paris matured so successful an organisation, that upon the first election under the constitution of the year III., it was almost a matter of certainty that the majority in the two Councils would become hostile to the existing government.

By the accessary decrees of the 5th and 13th Fructidor, only one-third of the Councils had been popularly elected in the year IV. (1795-6); but by the same decrees another third was to be returned by the electoral assemblies on the 1st Prairial year V. (20th May 1797). No attempt being made on the part of the Directory to counteract this provision, the elections took place accordingly, and resulted, as had been apprehended, in the almost universal return of counter-revolutionists. So decisive a victory against the Revolution, achieved in France itself, naturally filled the Royalists with exuberant hopes; and in their eagerness to gather its fruits, they committed the indiscretion of unduly precipitating a collision with the executive power. From the first moment of their gaining a preponderance in the legislative chambers, they commenced a furious war against the Directory; accusing it, as is usual with parliamentary oppositions, of all the evils that afflicted the country—the war, the general distress, the financial difficulties, were all charged upon it. They soon, moreover, elevated one of their own party to the directorial council board itself. It formed part of the constitution that one of the existing directors should retire every year, the lot of abdication being decided by chance. Letourneur drew the black ball, not without malignant accusations of collusion by the Royalists, who had fondly speculated upon a more resolute enemy

being cashiered by fortune. In truth, upon such slender threads often hang the destinies of nations, the verdict of the ballot-box in this instance, predetermined or not as it might be, was of material, perhaps conclusive moment, in preserving the Republic. The Councils selected Barthélemy to fill the vacant seat in the government. He was known simply as a diplomatist, having negotiated at Basle the treaties of peace with Prussia and Spain; but he belonged by sympathy to the anti-revolutionary party. Hereupon the egregious defects of the constitution of the year III. became flagrant. The directors forming the executive power were irremovable save by the annual mutilation of a member, and they possessed no authority to prorogue or dissolve the Councils. Hence no means existed of inducing harmony among the relative powers of the State, except by their mutual forbearance. This being, in the temper of the times, not to be expected, nothing remained but the employment of force to compose the difference, and each party made its preparations accordingly. The Councils had a legislative guard of 1500 men under the command of a trusty officer—Ramel; and they proposed, moreover, to call out the National Guard, which was not yet definitively reorganised. But their chief reliance they placed in the name and influence of Pichegru, the conqueror of Holland, whose meditated treachery when in command of the Army of the Rhine has been already mentioned. The Directory had no armed force at Paris but an insignificant guard; consequently Hoche, now at the head of the Army of the Sambre and Meuse in place of Jourdan, was directed to detach several regiments towards the capital, under pretence of sending them to Brest for a fresh expedition against Ireland. Against this violation of the constitution, and indeed against any resort to violent measures, Carnot protested, and openly seceded with Barthélemy from his colleagues. Although a sincere Republican, Carnot was a man of very strict principle; and rather than partake in an act he disapproved, preferred to be classed as a Royalist. The remaining three directors, therefore, to fight the battle of the Revolution, were Larevellière-Lepaux, Rewbell, and Barras. The two first were men of stern integrity and purpose; the latter was a dissolute and depraved person, in whom self-interest was the sole motive of action. Their chief adviser and instigator in this difficult conjuncture was, strange to say, an ex-noble and bishop of distinguished family—namely, Talleyrand, who was made minister of foreign affairs. They took advantage of Augereau's presence in Paris to appoint him to the command of the seventeenth military division, which comprehended the capital. This general had been purposely sent by Bonaparte from Italy to assist the Directory, for being himself sprung from the dregs of the faubourgs, he united to his martial talents the keenest detestation of aristocracy and royalty.

Whilst the executive and legislative powers of France were thus preparing to measure the sword in the halls of the capital, efforts were made to avert the horrible scandal, and to save the constitution by a timely reconciliation. In this object two very celebrated personages busied themselves on the side of the Directory—Benjamin Constant, and Madame de Stäel; but they laboured in vain. The Army of Italy thundered forth an anathema against the Clichyans, and reminded them that the distance from the Po to the Seine was not very great;* but they were too infatuated to heed either warnings or remonstrances. The Directory, therefore, knowing the value of the aggressive in such a crisis, determined to strike an immediate blow. Having brought the troops within a short distance of Paris, they were marched into that city by Augereau during the night of the 17th Fructidor (3d September), and by the morning of the 18th they surrounded the palace of the Tuileries, to the number of 12,000 men, with forty pieces of cannon. Augereau advanced at the head of his staff to the grenadiers of the Legislative Guard; and at his salutation, ‘Are you Republicans?’ they at once lowered their arms, and cried, ‘*Vive Augereau! Vive le Directoire!*’ The contest was at an end, and the victory won. Pichegru, Willot, Ranel, and several members of the Councils sitting in permanent committee were forthwith arrested and lodged in the Temple. By six o’clock in the morning the whole affair was completed. The minorities of the Councils were summoned to meet in the theatre of the Odeon and the School of Medicine near the Luxembourg, where, having assembled, a committee was appointed to digest a law of *public safety*. Sieyes and Boulay were nominated at the head of this committee; and in its name the latter propounded a measure of fearful import. This was no less than the banishment to Cayenne of fifty deputies, including many of illustrious name: Pichegru, Admiral Villaret-Joyeuse, Boissy d’Anglas, Portalis; of the two directors Carnot and Barthélemy; and of numerous others connected with the defeated party, both in the capital and in the provinces. Carnot eluded pursuit by connivance, and retired to Switzerland; but Pichegru, Barthélemy, and thirteen other leaders, were sent to the pestiferous climate of Sinnimari, whence many of them ultimately escaped. The remainder were for the most part confined in the Isle of Rhé and in other prisons. To the list of proscribed were likewise added the proprietors, editors, and publishers of forty-two journals, amounting to nearly 400 persons. Moreover, the elections for forty-eight departments were annulled, and the members returned expelled from the

* The language used by some of the divisions of the army in the resolutions they sent to the Directory was after the true Jacobin model. One of them began thus—‘Of all the animals produced by the caprice of nature, the vilest is a king, the meanest is a courtier, the foulest is a priest.’

legislature. All the laws against emigrants and priests, which had been repealed or modified by the Councils, and under which relaxations many thousands had returned, were re-enacted in all their rigour; the public exercise of the Christian religion was again prohibited; and in short the entire revolutionary system was re-established, except that banishment and exclusion from all civil rights was substituted for the guillotine. The Jacobins were in ecstasies, and came forth exultingly from their retreats, flattering themselves with a speedy resumption of power. Doubtless in the extreme severity of its measures, the Directory is amenable to the charge of excessive cruelty; but it thereby effectually crushed and almost exterminated the Royalist party, which for many a day thereafter ceased to manifest any symptom of vitality.

One of the most singular features of this great event was the perfect apathy with which it was viewed by the bulk of the population. The fiery spirits of the faubourgs, who had been ever foremost in scenes of strife, looked calmly on, indifferent as to the result, whilst armed soldiers tramped through the streets and beleaguered the citadel of the national legislature. Throughout France the feeling was one rather of curiosity than interest at the catastrophe of the long-pending dissension; so resignedly was that last sad termination of civil convulsions, *a military tyranny*, accepted by her worn-out and wearied inhabitants.* The Directory seemed conscious of the impunity with which it might proceed, for it took but little pains to gloss its arrant usurpation. Content with proclaiming to the people the existence of a royalist conspiracy as the motive of its conduct, which was proved undoubtedly as against Pichegru and some others, it allowed the trampled constitution to flounder in the mire. Retaining simply the residuary fragments of the Councils, to give an apparent legislative sanction to its acts, it established to all intents and purposes a despotic government. It is true that France was not competent to be ruled by any other at the time:

* Thibeaudeau, himself a member of the Five Hundred, and at first on the list of the proscribed, gives a very admirable narrative of the circumstances that led to the 18th Fructidor. In his own person, also, he presents a remarkable instance of the revolting tyranny in private life that marked this epoch. Having ceased his legislative functions, instead of returning to his native town of Poitiers, he wished to establish himself as an advocate in Paris. For this purpose it was necessary for him to get the permission of the minister of police; and he describes circumstantially the vexatious forms and delays he had to undergo before he could procure the necessary authorisation.—Vol. ii. 349-353. At the conclusion of his account he thus expresses himself:—"When I returned home, I broke out into a flaming soliloquy, at least as eloquent as that of Figaro. "Such, then, are the institutions of which we are so proud! We call ourselves free, and we are shackled by an infinity of minute fetters. For the last ten years we have talked of liberty, and have gargled it complacently enough, but have never swallowed a drop! A constitution exists, and a Frenchman cannot reside in the capital except at the pleasure of a minister."

since the first moment she was allowed a choice of men to represent her, she aberrated straightway to kiss the feet of her former masters; and being disappointed in this object, she upon the next occasion (Floreal year VI., May 1798) staggered back in an entirely opposite direction, and appointed men as her legislators of the anarchical or ultra-revolutionary school, whom the Directory refused to receive, and who, quashing the real returns, substituted fictitious ones in their stead, containing the names of men more to its liking. It has seldom fallen to the lot of any nation to show so emphatically how incapable it was of self-government as the French at the present period. But as if to parade the mockery of a national legislature, and render it more conspicuous, the Directory prescribed a distinctive costume for the members of the two Councils; and as classical associations were in affected vogue, it wrapped them in the toga of the Roman senators. For themselves, the Directors had assumed the more gaudy attire of chivalry, and arrayed their bodies as well as they could in the doublet, mantle, and plumed bonnet of Francis I. Larevellière-Lepaux was a person of mean and deformed figure, who presented a very ludicrous appearance in this grotesque livery; and he added greatly to the ridicule by putting himself at the head of the theophilanthropists, a species of religious sect who offered incense to the Deity with songs and flowers. Barras alone, of all his colleagues, had the lofty stature, swaggering air, and polished address which fitted him to figure in a historical garb, or to sustain the dramatic part of a sovereign. Accordingly upon him devolved in general the task of receiving foreign ambassadors, holding levees, and giving entertainments; a vocation responding agreeably to his inclinations, which prompted him to vain and luxurious courses. But by this greater prominence the example of his depravity and licentiousness had a most injurious effect upon the morals of society; and the Directorial era in France is universally painted as one of gross and deplorable corruption. The two new directors chosen in the place of Carnot and Barthélemy were ciphers of simple habits, whose names history records, but does not emblazon. They were called Merlin (de Douai) and François (de Neufchateau), the one nursed in the abstruse fields of law, the other addicted to the more genial pursuits of literature.

Meanwhile, above the clouds, amid the glaciers of the Noric and Julian Alps, two giants struggled in deadly combat. But the Gallic champion, by his superior agility and muscle, quickly overbore the imperial athlete. Too late, indeed, had the Aulic Council been moved to recall the Archduke Charles from the Rhine, and plant him to oppose the conqueror of all its other generals. Bonaparte, being himself strongly reinforced, gave him no time to gather his strength, but plunged madly on him up

the gorges of the Tyrol, of Carinthia and Carniola, cut off his detachments, took 20,000 prisoners, carried on fields of ice the terrific pass of Tarwis, the elements raging hundreds of feet below, drove him beyond the great mountain barrier, and paused only at Leoben on the 7th April, whence he looked down upon the enchanting valley of the Danube, and beheld the spires of Vienna glittering in the pellucid air only twenty-five leagues distant. Here commissioners from the emperor met him to negotiate terms of peace, or rather to receive the law of the victor. After a war of five years' duration, undertaken at first to reinstate despotism in France, and subsequently to dismember and extinguish her, Austria found herself obliged to succumb before the triumphant Republic she had so largely contributed to rear, and to purchase an ignominious reprieve at the expense of two of her richest possessions. Bonaparte was not a man to forego any advantage derivable from his success in arms, and he imposed very hard and nauseous conditions on the imperial cabinet. He insisted upon the absolute cession of Belgium and Lombardy, together with the entire line of the Rhine as the eastern frontier of France, including the bulwark of Germany, the vast fortress of Mayence. But Austria besought indemnities for these great losses; and as such could be found only in the spoliation of her weaker neighbours and friends, it was simply a question whose dominions she should be allowed to confiscate—Bavaria or Venice. Bonaparte was almost indifferent, except that Prussia would murmur at the aggrandisement of her rival in Germany, and he therefore preferred to let her pilfer in Italy. Accordingly, with a profligacy and voracity incomparable among the sins of nations, she swallowed up the greater part of Venice, whom, on every motive of sympathy and honour, she was prompted to respect and defend. This extraordinary act of iniquity excited the utmost disgust and horror throughout Europe; and the sentiment will not be mitigated in the everlasting imalediction of posterity. The crime undoubtedly belonged to France as well as to Austria; but in a far greater degree to the latter, since she nefariously appropriated the possessions of a faithful and attached ally, whilst the former did but consent to the despoilment of a hostile government, ready to assail her upon the least reverse, and who reasonably might deem it politic to show the world how callous to the obligations of probity and justice were the chief revilers of democratic excesses and ambition. Besides, it was intended by Bonaparte to compensate Venice with the Legations and Romagna, which purpose subsequent events tended to alter. The Venetian senate, misled by rumours of dangers and disasters incurred by the French army in its audacious advance, fomented a rising in its rear, and unwisely broke the neutrality it had previously ob-

served. A dreadful massacre of the French soldiers ensued, particularly in the hospitals at Verona, perpetrated by the fanatical peasantry, stimulated by their priests. This incident was eagerly embraced, and turned to account by the French general. Affecting a boundless indignation at the conduct of the government, which was the consequence rather of imbecility than of studied treachery, he declared war against it, and so effectually intimidated the senate, that of its own accord, on the 12th May, it voted by a large majority the abolition of the existing constitution, which had endured for nearly a thousand years, and the formation of a municipality freely chosen by the citizens. Thus by an act of suicide, committed under dread of a Republican sword, at last fell the ancient and celebrated oligarchy of Venice, which, although often earning the gratitude of Christendom by the wisdom of its counsels and the heroism of its actions against the fierce dominators of the Crescent, has justly merited reprobation for its uniform cruelty and oppression. Four thousand French soldiers were immediately ferried across the Lagoons; and by virtue of a pretended treaty, Bonaparte took possession of all the ships and naval stores in the arsenals, which he made use of to fit out an expedition to seize the Ionian Islands, which he was intent to occupy in furtherance of a gigantic project already meditated in his soaring and foreseeing mind. He likewise drew from the exhausted resources of Venice an additional contribution of three millions of francs in specie. But he had a yet sterner fate in reserve for this unfortunate State. Notwithstanding the democratic revolution effected in it, and his own pledge to sustain it, he resolved, for equivalent concessions by Austria, to extinguish its nationality altogether, and deliver it over, capital and all, into the hands of the emperor. This was carried into execution by the definitive treaty of Campo-Formio, concluded after long negotiations by Bonaparte on the part of France, and M. de Cobentzel on the part of Austria, and signed at the country seat of Passeriano on the 17th of October. By this treaty the preliminaries of Leoben were materially modified, and the organisation of Italy radically subverted. The Cispadan Republic was merged in the greater one of the Cisalpine, of which Milan was made the capital, and the Adige the boundary on the east. Austria also ceded to it Mantua, in return for which she obtained Venice, and, with trivial exceptions, the whole of its vast possessions on the mainland. This transaction was equally disgraceful to both parties, perhaps most so to Bonaparte, who acted with unscrupulous perfidy, and in direct opposition to the orders of his government. But he judged his ascendancy too great to be contested, and inferred correctly that the Directory would not venture to disavow him and refuse its sanction to the treaty. Its terms were too advantageous and flattering to the nation; besides,

the Directory feared the imputation, often raised against it, of selfishly perpetuating the war; consequently, amidst universal transports of joy, unchecked by any misgivings of remorse, the peace was ratified, and the name of Bonaparte extolled and benisoned not only as that of the greatest warrior, but the first diplomatist of his age, and the beneficent pacificator of his country.

The alliance with Spain, the defection of Portugal and Naples, the peace with Austria, the erection of a chain of dependent republics—the Batavian, the Cisalpine, and the Ligurian (late Genoa)—left England without an associate to contend against the colossal power of France. It is true she had captured several important colonies, but they being in distant quarters of the globe, added nothing to her European strength, which was otherwise palsied by a concatenation of most sinister events. In the early part of 1797 a gloom hung over her through which the most sanguine could scarce detect a ray of hope. From the continued drain of specie to feed the continental war, and the enormous sums wasted in unprofitable expeditions, the Bank of England was obliged to suspend payment, and the crisis of a national bankruptcy was averted only by making its notes a legal tender; thus surpassing the French Revolutionists, whom Pitt had so often taken to task for their financial devices, by establishing a currency in an absolutely inconvertible paper. This measure, adopted in February, was followed in April by the yet more alarming occurrence of a general mutiny among the seamen of the fleets. These men, upon whom the safety of the country exclusively depended, were treated with a neglect and barbarity only possible in an aristocratic government blind to abuses and deaf to remonstrances, but which at length grew intolerable, and wrought them to the pitch of exasperation. They hoisted the red flag of revolt, disarmed and imprisoned their officers, blockaded the mouth of the Thames, and openly declared that if their grievances were not redressed, they would carry the ships over to the enemy. Fortunately these gallant fellows were too much attached to their flag, and animated with too blunt a patriotism, to execute their threat; whilst the mingled firmness and compliance of the government in dealing with their demands, ultimately availed to suppress an insurrection which threatened the nation with positive extinction. But the sense of this peril struck deeply into the public heart of Britain; and until the day of death, none of the current generation ever recurred, even in secret thought, without a shudder to the terrible days of ‘the mutiny at the Nore.’ An almost general rebellion in Ireland added to the horrors and difficulties of the times; and under such a pressure of calamity, it is not surprising that Pitt, notwithstanding all his boastings, found himself again compelled to solicit peace from the

French Republic. The preliminaries of Leoben removed any impediment arising from regard to Austria; and it might be reasonably supposed that a surrender of the principal acquisitions made during the war in the East and West Indies would purchase the indispensable boon. Lord Malmesbury, accordingly, repaired to Lille in the month of July, and there opened conferences with plenipotentiaries on the part of France. The negotiations proceeded under apparently favourable auspices whilst the struggle between the Directory and the Royalists was still pending; but after the 18th Fructidor they were abruptly closed by the new government, which on sundry accounts was desirous of keeping alive the war with England. First, it hoped, by a junction of the Spanish and Batavian fleets with the French, so to outnumber the British naval force in the Channel, that an invading army might be safely landed in England or Ireland; and secondly, it wished to find employment for Bonaparte, whose residence in Paris it contemplated with uneasiness. Young Hoche having suddenly died in the meridian of his glory, not without some suspicion of foul play, which there was nothing to warrant, the command of the expedition against the British islands had become vacant; and on the same day that the treaty of Campo-Formio was published, an ordinance appeared appointing Bonaparte commander-in-chief of the 'Army of England.' The prospect of a successful invasion, if it were at all feasible, had undoubtedly improved, and any enterprise might seem practicable under such a leader as the conqueror of Italy. But the projected junction of the fleets, the main condition of success, was for a time at least prevented by the defeat of the Spanish contingent off Cape St Vincent by Sir John Jervis on the 14th February, and by the signal victory of Admiral Duncan over the Dutch fleet off Camperdown on the 12th October. Still the scheme was too favourite a one to be abandoned; and Truguet, the able minister of marine in France, made the most strenuous efforts to place the navies of the Republic and its allies on so formidable a footing as might insure the subjugation of England. Her complete isolation served to stimulate these efforts, for she had now not a single auxiliary in Europe, and consequently was reduced to her own unassisted resources. Even the Empress Catherine, who had at length agreed to take part in the war against France, had been arrested by apoplexy before she could accomplish her design. She died on the 10th November 1796, leaving behind her a reputation tarnished by numerous vices both of the woman and the monarch, but relieved by many high and shining qualities. She was succeeded by her only son Paul, a personage of infirm intellect, who, having been 'kept in severe thralldom by his mother, acted counter to all her intentions, and consequently refused to fulfil her stipulations of offensive alliance with England. A new sove-

reign likewise ascended the throne of Prussia in 1797. Frederick-William II. came to his end in that year, after a reign certainly most inglorious, but productive, nevertheless, of considerable advantage to his country. His conduct towards Poland, whose independence he had solemnly guaranteed, was truly vile and culpable; yet it was not without beneficial consequences to mankind at large. The formation of extensive and powerful states is conducive to the progress of civilisation and of national liberties, which is, on the contrary, impeded by the multiplication of petty, soulless, and disjointed principalities; moreover, Poland had manifested her utter incapacity to maintain anything like a stable or rational government, and her extinction may be the less regretted, both on account of the turbulent, impracticable, and debased character of her population, and of the undoubted fact that it tended materially, by distracting the attention of the northern courts, to prevent the conquest of France and the total eclipse of freedom, perhaps for many generations, in every corner of the European world.

Bonaparte had accomplished his task in Italy; and after putting the finishing hand to the constitution of the Cisalpine Republic, he prepared to return to France. His progress through the intervening countries was one continued ovation. Princes, ministers, magistrates, and people flocked to attend his steps, to pay him the homage alike of fear and of admiration. He touched at Rastadt on his route, where the congress was assembled to settle the peace of the German Empire with France. He took his seat among the congregated diplomatists with the air and sternness of a master, and banished from his presence the Swedish representative, the same Count de Fersen who had aided Louis XVI. in his midnight evasion. But the dull routine of deliberations with a crowd of methodical and thick-witted Germans was not suited to his impatient temperament; and after a brief sojourn he hastened onwards to the goal of Paris. There all were in the agony of expectation to behold him. He entered the city on the night of the 5th December, and immediately proceeded to a private house he had caused to be purchased for him; in which, with the inimitable tact that marked him, he concealed at once his person and his ambition. None knew better than he how to impress and captivate the minds of men, but it was not by vulgar show or tinsel pomp; he struck by the force of egregious contrast, and, resplendent in the glory that mortals worship, affected a simplicity of costume and habits, a seclusion of living, which invested him with a mingled grandeur and mysteriousness, all the more imposing from its variance with the ostentatious bent of the Gallic character. On the day following his arrival, Talleyrand presented him in form to the Directory. The meeting was not the most frank and cordial doubtless, for jealousies and

dissensions had already crept in to induce alienation ; but appearances were well preserved, and the giddy mob applauded with exultation the pleasing deception. It was inevitable that both to himself and to the government his position must be irksome. *He* was too great a man to be a servant ; *they* were too conscious of his superiority and the precarious basis of their power to feel at ease before him. A magnificent festival, however, was held in his honour, at which all the public bodies of the State assisted ; but the solemnity of which was somewhat marred by the meretricious taste prevailing for antique ceremonies and costumes. But in the enthusiasm of the moment extravagances were overlooked : amid the glittering assemblage but one object was seen—the attenuated figure of the hero, whose renown seemed so incommensurate with his physical proportions. Yet the striking air of intelligence and dignity that marked his features, his pale and classic cast of countenance, his bright and piercing eye, above all, his youthful age, caused an inexpressible emotion in the beholders, which excited some almost to tears, others to the wildest expressions of rapture. It was in the character of a Pacificator he appeared, bearing in his hand the counterpart treaty of Campo-Formio, which he presented to the Directory. Talleyrand pronounced a eulogium upon the conqueror, whom he extolled especially for his love of simplicity and of studious retirement, from which it might be difficult to draw him, the orator feared, so little did his ambition partake the ignoble passion for power and dominion. Bonaparte also delivered a short speech, to which Barras replied as the organ of the Directory. Then a solemn hymn was chanted by a hundred voices ; two generals advanced and raised aloft the mighty standard given by the Directory to the Army of Italy, bearing in characters of gold the narrative of its achievements ; the fraternal embrace was given by all the directors to its great leader ; the gregarious orchestra sounded exhilarating strains of martial music ; the triumphant roar of cannons reverberated ; the spectators and the outer multitude burst into impassioned acclamations ; the scene closed amid an intoxicating madness. From this moment the character of the French Revolution was completely changed, and the military element became predominant to the exclusion of every other ; so dangerous to the liberty of nations are wars, so destructive of civil principles is the infatuation produced by military successes ! With the festival to Bonaparte vanished the last flickering hope of a free constitution being organised in France.

In its refusal to treat with England for peace, even on terms sufficiently inglorious to the latter power, the Directory had plainly evinced its violent tendencies. It speedily gave additional evidence of the total disregard in which it held the opinion of mankind or the simplest rights of nations. Not being satisfied

with the partial revolution that had taken place in Holland, consequent upon the banishment of the Stadtholder, it dissolved the existing government by force of arms on the 22d January 1798, and substituted in its place one more analogous to that of France. The new Dutch Directory and Councils, however, proving more democratic and refractory than was palatable, through Joubert, who had been sent to command the French forces in Holland, it dismissed them in their turn a few months afterwards, and instituted a purely military government in the unfortunate United Provinces, quartering on them a large body of troops, and treating them in all respects as a French dependency. Precisely the same course was pursued in the Cisalpine Republic, whose constitution was twice altered in an arbitrary manner, and a treaty enforced upon it by which it was made to pay a yearly subsidy of 10,000,000 francs for the maintenance of 25,000 soldiers. Italy, in fact, under the French Protectorate, became a prey to the most scandalous military excesses; the generals and officers of the armies of occupation indulging in a system of plunder and license that has provoked the strong animadversion of even the Republican writers themselves. Under the most flimsy pretexts Rome and Piedmont were revolutionised, invaded, and conquered. The Pope retired to a convent in Tuscany, and his dominions were converted into the 'Roman Republic,' after the ancient mistress of the world had been rifled by the horde of modern Gauls commanded by Massena, more insatiable far than the primitive savage Brennus. The king of Sardinia was compelled to abdicate, and, retiring to the island of that name, abandon Piedmont to its ruthless devastators. But the crowning iniquity of the French Directory was the invasion and conquest of Switzerland. That famous confederacy, celebrated for its heroic struggles in the cause of freedom, consisted of thirteen cantons enjoying different constitutions, but all more or less under aristocratic domination. Berne was the chief city of the federation; and by a singular arrangement, certain of the larger cantons held smaller ones in a sort of feudal subjection at once galling and tyrannical. This was the case of Berne with regard to the Pays de Vaud, which revolted, and placed itself under French protection. Less would have sufficed to stimulate the long-meditated intervention; and two French armies, detached from the Rhine and Italy, penetrated into Switzerland in the course of February 1798. The whole country was torn by domestic factions striving for mastery, and in many places the French were received with enthusiasm as deliverers. But the Bernese government was determined to offer a resolute resistance to this aggression; and collecting an army of 20,000 men under the command of General d'Erlach, prepared to defend Berne to the last extremity. A desperate engagement took place in front of that city on the 5th March, which resulted

in the complete overthrow of the Swiss, who massacred their leaders, from suspicions of treachery. Berne was occupied by the victorious French, and its public treasure, amounting to several millions of francs, disgracefully appropriated by them. Severe contributions were levied on the other towns of the federation, as well as a special assessment of 15,000,000 francs laid on the aristocratic families; and it has been said, with some degree of probability, that this infamous spoliation was planned as one of the principal motives for the war. After the reduction of Berne, the subjugation of the lesser cantons was not attended with much difficulty, although the peasants, with the priests at their head, exhibited all their ancient valour; and the old constitutions being everywhere abrogated, the 'Helvetian Republic' was launched into the world, one and indivisible, on the exact model of the French. An offensive and defensive alliance followed as a matter of course; and thus Switzerland, which, from its long-recognised neutrality, had often contributed to preserve the peace of Europe, passed into the military possession of the French, and proved of inestimable advantage to them in the first succeeding war.

Such a series of outrages, committed with simultaneous lawlessness, has happily been seldom rivalled in the annals of crime, and must for ever stamp the members of the Directory with the deepest opprobrium. It is a lamentable fact, that purely democratic governments are more rapacious and unprincipled in their transactions with other powers than any others, even the most despotic, and this for many palpable reasons. In the first place, the men directing such governments can rarely be the most virtuous and enlightened of the community, since they are the choice of uneducated masses, easily incited by the vulgar impulses of passion, and insensible to the higher influences of reason or discretion. Presumption and arrogance being the foibles of ignorance, it results that such will be the characteristics of these upstart rulers, who come naturally to be the echoes of those who created them. Secondly, in such states the public profit seems a sufficient warranty for any violations of right and justice, since the stigma scarcely attaches to any individual, and communities are callous to the compunctions of conscience. Hence every enterprise, however opposed to the plainest canons of morality, will receive the sanction of a popular approbation, or be at all events viewed with indifferent complacency; it being a great mistake to suppose that the lust of aggrandisement inflames the breasts only of monarchs and conquerors: it is equally the unhealthy appetite of populations. The example of France at this moment, and until her final prostration, avouches the truth of these reflections; for no sooner was she rid of a war undoubtedly just in its origin on her part, than she cast her eyes around, as if in pure

wantonness, to see whom she might devour, and laid violent hands on the possessions of all her neighbours. This horrible spirit of encroachment henceforth never slumbered, and necessarily produced an incessant state of warfare, which continued until the ultimate era of a national humiliation the most memorable in the records of time, but one that can excite no pity or sorrow inasmuch as it was indispensable to the repose of the world. Now in the full flush of development, no considerations even of ordinary prudence availed to check it. Bonaparte, stirred by an insatiable thirst for fame, and by a dreamy vision of emulating on his Oriental field of conquest, the Jove-born Macedonian, had long looked to Egypt as the country in which to commence another career of immortal glory. He was disinclined to undertake the invasion of England or Ireland, not because he despaired of making a successful descent, which he always held to be practicable, but because it must, until the command of the sea were secured, prove a mere freebooting expedition, certain to be ruined in the end. He argued, therefore, that it was in India England was to be most surely struck, and that the possession of Egypt was the necessary preliminary to dealing the blow. It must ever be deemed most fortunate for England, and perhaps for the world, that he formed this conclusion, or that the impetuosity of his ardour deranged his judgment, and inspired him with an uncontrollable longing for a wild chimera. At that time England was wholly unprepared to repel an army of invaders, too confidently trusting to the protection of her ships, and deriding the danger as an impossibility; but seeing the formidable preparations in progress along the entire coast from the Texel to Brest, she began to arm in earnest, as against a terrible contingency, and her people in affright forsook their industrial pursuits to assume the implements and learn the practices of war. An invasion of Ireland was even more to be dreaded, since that country was now in open rebellion, and the aid of a few thousand French veterans could have scarcely failed to secure the establishment of a Hibernian Republic in immediate dependence upon the French. The success with which two minor expeditions, consisting of 1500 and 3000 men respectively, eluded all the British cruisers, and actually reached the coast of Ireland, but too late for any effective purpose, as the insurrection had been suppressed, clearly shows how feasible the enterprise really was, and how great the danger to which the British Empire lay exposed. The Directory had this project much at heart, and was extremely unwilling to hear of its postponement for the romantic excursion to Egypt. It did not object to the seizure of Egypt on any ground of injustice, as being the possession of an old and steadfast ally of France, because on the subject of right the only question with it was, whether or not the

appropriation would be serviceable to France; but it objected that the hazards of such an undertaking far outweighed the prospect of advantages to be derived from its realisation. Egypt had formerly been the great entrepôt of Eastern commerce, and might be made so again; its dominion also would confer on France the undoubted supremacy of the Mediterranean; moreover, it was a rich and fertile country, capable, as antiquity had demonstrated, of a boundless development. But on the other hand were the perils of the sea from the British fleets, the loss of 40,000 veteran soldiers and of its best general at a time when the peace of Europe was still unsettled, and when the new system of aggressions might be expected to rekindle the animosity of enemies, the immense expenditure of money which so costly an enterprise required. It needed all the influence and energy of Bonaparte to wring a reluctant consent from the Directory to his scheme; and probably it would have been finally negatived, but that it insured the desirable object of his own protracted absence from France. No sooner was this consent gained, however, than he commenced his preparations for the expedition with a promptitude, foresight, intelligence, and indefatigability such as no commander has ever exhibited or combined in all the illustrious examples given upon the voluminous page of history.

The first material point was to deceive the British cabinet as to the destination of the projected enterprise; and as the secret was known to none but Bonaparte himself and the five directors, it was easy to accomplish this. The army collected in the south to be embarked at Toulon and other ports was called the left wing of the Army of England, as if it were intended to pass the Straits of Gibraltar, and so co-operate with the Atlantic and Channel armaments. The British ministry was undoubtedly thrown into the cruellest uncertainty by this feint; and though it suspected some deceit, it could not form any certain conclusion as to the threatened point. It might be Constantinople, the East Indies, the West Indies, Egypt, for the last entered into the calculation of probabilities. Thus puzzled in its conjectures, it took the only precautions possible, by augmenting the Mediterranean fleet, and enjoining its commander, Admiral Nelson, to keep a strict watch on the port of Toulon. Such an injunction that true-hearted sailor did not need; but he was obliged to retire at times from his station to refit from the effects of gales, and upon one of these occasions the Toulon fleet and the immense flotilla of transports slipped out unperceived by him, sailing along the French and Italian coasts to pick up the different contingents at Genoa, Ajaccio, and Civita Vecchia. The whole expedition, when united, consisted of thirteen sail of the line, two sixty-fours, fourteen frigates, thirty-two brigs, cutters, and smaller craft, together with 400 transports, carrying in the whole nearly 40,000 troops of all arms,

and 10,000 sailors. Never had so gigantic an armament been launched into the waters of the sea, and never had such profound secrecy been observed with regard to its destination. Not a man on board of it save the commander-in-chief knew whither he was going, or upon what object bent; yet such was the implicit confidence reposed in this young general, that not only the soldiers followed him with alacrity, but general officers also of the first celebrity, Kleber, Desaix, Menou, Lannes, Murat, Berthier, Caffarelli, and others; whilst several distinguished men of science and arts, Monge, Berthollet, Fourier, Denon, Larrey, Desgenettes, eagerly accepted his invitation to accompany him. With these latter he composed what was called the Institute of Egypt, afterwards so celebrated for its transactions, the sittings of which were commenced on the voyage in his cabin; for when in repose, nothing delighted him so much as scientific or literary disquisitions. Having left Toulon on the 19th May, he was twenty-one days in reaching Malta, before which place he appeared on the 9th June. This island was then held by the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, who had been instituted in the time of the Crusades to oppose the Mussulman navies and corsairs, but who had long ceased to perform any such functions, and were immersed in vice and effeminacy. From its central position, admirable harbour, and immense fortifications, it was of infinite value to any power seeking pre-eminence in the Mediterranean; and Bonaparte had, even when in Italy, begun machinations for its acquisition. These had proved so successful, that almost everything was arranged for its surrender to him when he came before it; and after some show of fighting, the Grand Master capitulated upon conditions of personal advantage to himself. Thus Bonaparte had the singular good fortune of acquiring one of the strongest insular fortresses in the world without striking a blow, and simply as he passed on to an enterprise of greater moment. Leaving in it Vaubois with a garrison of 3000 men, he continued his voyage on the 19th to the shores of Egypt, keeping well to the south, and out of the direct track to Alexandria, with the view of avoiding the British squadron. Nothing occurred to molest his course, and on the 1st July he descried the lofty minarets and monuments of the city, which still bore the name of its great founder, but which had since his time passed through so many dominations and faiths. His imagination was fired at the sight, and he pressed the debarkation with the utmost celerity. He landed on the same day with 4000 men, and marching during the night across the sandy plain, attacked Alexandria at daybreak, without the assistance of a single cannon. But the defences were in ruins, and although the Turkish soldiers at first offered a stubborn defence, they were quickly overpowered, and in a few hours the tricoloured flag had displaced the banner of the Crescent. The rest of the army was

ended with all possible despatch, and Bonaparte made immediate reparations for advancing into the interior. Before doing so, he published two proclamations, one to the people of the country, the other to his own soldiers. In the first he disclaimed any hostility towards the Sublime Porte, and professed to be animated solely with the desire of chastising the Mamelukes, whose dominion was equally inimical to the sultan and oppressive to the population; in the second he explained to his troops the chief dogma of Mohammedanism, and exhorted them to respect it as they had done the religious creeds of the Christian and the Jew. 'Manifest your respect for the ceremonies of the Koran,' he said, 'the same respect you have shown to convents and synagogues, the religion of Moses and that of Jesus Christ.' In truth the French soldiers regarded them all with the like indifference, viewing them as mere varieties of the same generic superstition.

In this successful navigation of many hundred leagues with so prodigious an armament and eventual safe landing on the shores of Egypt, was shown how precarious are the chances of a collision at sea, and how perilous must ever be the situation of a state which trusts to a naval superiority alone for its safety. The zeal and intrepidity of Nelson were of no avail to intercept the expedition. He hurried after it with indefatigable ardour, and actually passed it within a few leagues, but he failed to learn certain tidings of it until nearly a month after Bonaparte was in possession of Alexandria. At length, on the 1st August, he came in sight of the French fleet, most injudiciously moored in the Bay of Aboukir. Ships of the line could not then enter the port of Alexandria without being lightened, and consequently Admiral Bruceys, the French naval commander, had anchored close into the shore of the bay, with the left of his line supported by a small battery on the isle of Aboukir. Numerically the hostile fleets were equal in force, each consisting of thirteen ships; but the British were all seventy-fours, whereas the French flag-ship *L'Orient* had 120 guns, and two others eighty each. Nelson besides had no frigates, the gross mismanagement of the British Admiralty being also conspicuous in the otherwise defective state of his squadron,* whilst the French, on the other hand, possessed four of those useful auxiliaries. It was only in superior skill and daring that this unrivalled seaman surpassed his enemies. Bruceys was unprepared for an action, thinking Nelson would defer the attack until the following day, and trusting to the impossibility of his position being turned between the island and the shoal behind him. It was the favourite tactic of the British navy at this period, and

* Napoleon says:—'Nelson's squadron was one of the worst that England had ever fitted out of late years.'—*Mem.* vol. ii. p. 175. There is no doubt the French ships were very superior in quality to the British, one of them that was taken, *Canopus*, being even, after a lapse of fifty years, the *crack* sailer of the whole British navy.

especially of Nelson, to cut an enemy's line, and place half his ships between two fires, so as to insure their inevitable destruction. The manœuvre is one that has rarely failed when practised against the French and Spanish, even in the open sea; but if it could be accomplished against a moored line, it must necessarily be yet more certain in its operation. Hence Nelson at once determined to turn Brueys's left, and get between him and the shore, saying to his flag-captain, 'Where there is room for the enemy to swing, there must be room for us to anchor.' At three in the afternoon he stood into the bay, *Culloden* leading in the van of the column. She unfortunately struck in attempting to round *Guerrier*, the extreme ship of the French line; but benefiting by her mishap to avoid the shoal, her consorts *Goliath*, *Zealous*, *Audacious*, *Theseus*, and *Orion* were more successful, and by six o'clock were all in close action on the inner side. Nelson with *Vanguard* and the rest of the fleet ranged up on the outer line as far as *Tonnant*, eighth of the French, so that five of their ships were not engaged. The fate of the eight thus assailed was from that moment sealed; but they made a heroic defence. Brueys himself, in particular, on board his immense three-decker *L'Orient*, towering far above all her opponents, fought with a desperate courage, and fell killed on his quarter-deck by a cannon ball. He had disabled *Bellerophon* by his superior fire, and backed by his two powerful neighbours *Franklin* and *Tonnant*, withstood the successive assaults of *Alexander*, *Majestic*, *Leander*, *Swiftsure*, excelling them in weight of metal. But they peppered him too hotly with their cross broadsides, and in the darkest hour of this dreadful night, when the roar of the cannonade and the howls of battle were at their height, amidst which he himself had expired, his stupendous vessel took fire and shed a horrible illumination over the scene of devastation. The combatants paused for a moment, appalled at the awful spectacle, and when she blew up with an explosion that seemed to rend the elements asunder, not a gun was fired for fully fifteen minutes. Then the French renewed the fight with shouts of vengeance; but their rage and their fortitude were equally powerless. Nelson had them in his grasp too surely: by three in the morning the firing had become partial, and by six had wholly ceased. The French fleet was destroyed, Villeneuve alone escaping with two sail from his inglorious inactivity on the right wing. So ended the famous battle of the Nile, that operated so decisively on the destinies of the world. From this overwhelming disaster the French navy never recovered. Bonaparte subdued and successfully held Egypt, it is true; but without a secure maritime communication, its possession was of little value. Besides, his Oriental career was abruptly checked, and he had the mortification soon after of being defeated before a wretched Turkish fortress on the coast of Syria,

St Jean d'Acre, principally through the indomitable energy of another British sailor, Sir Sidney Smith. At no moment of his life did he feel so acutely the vexation of a frustrated purpose, and in the bitterness of his heart he cursed the author of his disappointment. He who was to trample on the necks of emperors and kings as so many of the vilest of the earth, repined that fortune denied him another seat of empire on the Euphrates, the Indus, or the Bosphorus; and as he passed gloomily along the desolate shore of Carmel, on his return to Egypt, he often exclaimed impassionately, 'That man has marred my destiny!'

All Europe stood in amazement and perturbation at the events that were passing. The prodigious increase of power by France, and the revolting purposes to which she applied it, began to arouse a universal dread for the independence of nations and the existence of social order or public morality. It was natural that kings and aristocracies should regard even the first outbreak of the Revolution with dislike and apprehension; now, from the frightful features it had assumed, this feeling was partaken by the whole world, and prevailed even among the most democratic communities. The enlightened citizens of the United States shared it with the ignorant populations of Sarmatia or Roumelia. Consequently, upon the first reverse sustained by France, all the nations of the earth seemed to rush simultaneously to quell her. The sympathies of mankind were enlisted against her, for she had shown how hideous was the spirit by which she was actuated. The friends of freedom and of human amelioration blushed that they had nourished her virgin struggles for liberty by approbation, and despaired of the sacred cause with which they had once associated her name. Such was the general indignation, that Pitt, undoubtedly her most steadfast foe, easily excited against her a second and more formidable coalition than the first; and this time he did so justly, and for a good end, if he had known how to moderate his desires in its attainment. Unhappily he was a minister completely under the sway of passion; and exasperated as he had been by the uniform defeat of all his schemes, by the unvarying failure of all his prognostications, he had come to view France almost with the malignity of a personal enemy, and was intent not so much upon any rational compromise of differences with her, as upon her humiliation, upon her subjection to a brand at once of thralldom and of punishment. In this frame of mind, participated by the Tory aristocracy under whose wing he ruled, he was incapable of improving the opportunity to compose the peace of Europe, and with the flush of success revived the odious pretension, albeit disclaimed by him when under adverse pres-

* He cherished these extraordinary notions to the last, and often recurred to them in glowing language at St Helena. So superior is the enchantment of imagination over the realities of even the highest fruition!

sure, of dictating to the French what form of government they should possess, and of reimposing upon them the abhorrent régime of the Bourbons.

Upon his first accession to the throne, Paul of Russia had been restrained from actively manifesting his hatred of the French Revolution by a filial detestation of his deceased mother; but a grotesque circumstance had served to rekindle it in all its intensity. The Grand Master and Knights of St John, an order of strictly Catholic institution, foreboding evil from the proximity of Republican France to their island, and not over-confident in the abstinence of England, had cast around in quest of a protector, and their eyes could alight upon none so potent and fitting as the lay head of the schismatic Greek Church. The vanity of Paul was gratified by their selection, for it pleased him to be thought the august guardian of nobility and chivalry, and he forthwith accepted the craved protectorate. The audacious seizure of his clients' dominion by Bonaparte irritated him to the pitch of madness, and he vehemently denounced it as an atrocious robbery and an inexpiable offence to himself. This unfortunate prince was at all events disinterested, and of all the potentates leagued against France, was alone free from sordid motives. He would at once have rushed upon the foe to avenge his quarrel and vindicate the drooping cause of aristocracy, but he could not reach him without the acquiescence of Prussia or Austria. The first of these powers was moved by selfishness and jealousy to continue its neutrality; the latter had but recently concluded a peace, and was buoyed by hopes of procuring, through an understanding with France, a yet larger slice of Italy, upon the basis of Piedmont being given to the Cisalpine Republic, and the states of the Pope to the king of Sardinia. For a bribe of this sort the emperor would have overlooked the usurpations of France since the treaty of Campo-Formio; but it seemed that another son of the Holy Church had set his heart upon having her possessions, and his precipitation to grasp them hurried on the crisis of a general war. The court of Naples stood pre-eminent for depravity and profligacy among its kindred in Europe, the ruling spirit of it being the queen, a sister of the hapless Marie-Antoinette, but endowed with none of her virtues. This licentious woman entertained an indescribable horror of the French Revolution, and was incessant in her machinations to rouse the powers against it. Nelson's victory of the Nile gave such an impulse to her ardour that she lost all prudence, and before she could hope for any effective co-operation, directed an invasion of the Roman republic, which she proposed to annex to Naples. General Mack, a name of calamitous celebrity, led the Neapolitan troops, and was accompanied by the imbecile king in person. He found the Republican army under Championnet scattered in several divisions,

and having taken it by surprise, easily penetrated to the city of Rome, which was entered in triumph by the king of Naples on the 29th November 1798. But Championnet speedily concentrated his forces, and in a succession of actions drove Mack out of the Roman territories, pursuing him and his worthless rabble of an army to the very gates of Naples, which capital he conquered after a most sanguinary conflict of three days with the Lazzaroni, who were the only part of the population that evinced the least bravery or patriotism. The court took refuge on board Nelson's fleet, carrying off all the treasure there was time to remove, and the French proceeded forthwith to gather plunder and establish a Republic. This new creation was called after a name known in antiquity, the Parthenopeian Republic; and it completed the chain of dependent affiliations through the whole of the peninsula, consolidating, as it seemed, the complete preponderance of the great Gallic parent.

This event put an end to all further hesitation on the part of Austria, and vast preparations were made on both sides for immediate hostilities. One of the blackest crimes on record, chargeable to the Emperor Francis, signalised their commencement. The congress of Rastadt had been still sitting, discussing with phlegmatic procrastination the numerous questions at issue between France and the empire, but was now precipitately broken up. The French negotiators had been twice changed in the course of its protracted deliberations, but upon its dissolution they were three in number—Jean Debry, Bonnier, and Roberjeot. On leaving Rastadt, these men, invested with the sacred character of ambassadors, were barbarously assassinated by Austrian hussars, and their repositories rifled. The only extenuation of this foul deed put forth by king-worshippers consists in asserting that the murder was a superfluous act of the hussars, and that the intention was simply to seize the papers of the Legation. But the papers were as inviolable as the persons, and this excuse fails to assuage the emperor from a stigma which the chief of a savage tribe would have died rather than incur. Thus preluded, the war was of a frightful cast. Bitterly now had the Directory to repent its misdeeds, since the very extension of its conquests caused the dissemination and consequent feebleness of its means. So true it is that the Divine verities of the moral law are exemplified on nations with the same force as on individuals. Wickedness hath retribution. In every page of history is detected the invariable action of a Providential government with an invariable aim—the practical elucidation of an omnipotent justice, which may delay its stroke, but surely deals it in the end. Thus is explained the commandment which might otherwise show, and indeed has been derided as showing, the Deity in the depreciating light of a blind avenger, wherein it is pronounced that the

iniquity of the father will be visited upon the children in the third and fourth generations. As nations form ever-shifting aggregates whose units are hourly procreated or expiring, judgments need not be immediately invoked, because sins may be said to be as it were impersonal; hence they are suspended until they fall on perhaps an innocent and repentant posterity.

The best soldiers and first captain of France were in Egypt, unholy torn from the Ottoman dominion. Other armies she had in Holland, on the Rhine, in Switzerland, in Lombardy, in Rome, in Naples. Three hundred thousand men would have scarcely sufficed to defend so vast an extent of frontier, and these combined forces mustered barely the half. Although the military mania pervaded the population, it alone could not be trusted to supply the impetus of a voluntary enlistment adequate to the emergency; and hence came that terrible enactment, *the law of the Conscription*, which, in its future development, proved so fatal a curse to the happiness of families and the repose of mankind. Under it a forced levy of 200,000 recruits was decreed, which was carried into execution with all possible despatch. In the meantime, if soldiers were wanting, there was an abundance of generals possessing superior merit. Unfortunately the best of them, Moreau, was in disgrace, from his equivocal conduct with regard to the treason of Pichegru; Joubert, Bernadotte, and Augereau too, all good officers, were at enmity with the government. Consequently a most deplorable choice was made for the command of the Army of Italy in the person of Scherer, whose vigour of mind was enfeebled by age and infirmities. Moreau, however, with a modesty and magnanimity which shed great lustre upon him, consented to act as one of his generals of division; a circumstance which eventually stemmed the tide of calamity. On other points the selections were better. Brune was in Holland, Jourdan on the Rhine, Massena in Switzerland, Macdonald in Naples; the last having succeeded Championnet, cashiered for opposing the exactions and robberies of the commissioners sent to Naples by the Directory. The forces of these commanders, however, were far inferior to those of the allies: a disparity which the Directory, in its presumption, unduly disregarded, thinking from the marvels of the last campaign that the French soldiers were invincible against any superiority of numbers; and it ordered the offensive to be taken on all the three principal theatres of operations—the Rhine, Switzerland, and the Adige. The new auxiliaries of the coalition not only swelled the ranks of the enemy, but gave him an unwonted confidence from the fame of their leader and their own intrepid character. This leader was Suwarroff, who had gained a high reputation in the wars of Catherine against the Turks. He was a barbarian, who possessed certain instincts of genius. In his general features he resembled one of the Asiatic

conquerors—Genghis-Khan or Tamerlane—though destitute of their capacious intellects. He had little knowledge of the abstruse science of war, his chief quality consisting in the ardour and fortitude he could impart to his soldiers, whose love he earned by familiarity and similarity of habits, even to the gross personal filth which characterise the Russians. He was admirably adapted to command such men, for to great robustness of body they join an obdurateness of spirit, sensitive to the fire of fanaticism, which render them truly sturdy and formidable warriors. The bayonet was the weapon in which they principally excelled, and their charge with it was most difficult to withstand.* Their main strength consequently lay in infantry, which tended to give the allies, when acting in concert, a tremendous advantage, inasmuch as the Austrians had always been distinguished for the superior excellence of their cavalry. The French, therefore, were overmatched in two arms, but they surpassed their adversaries in the practice of artillery, which has come to be of such paramount importance in modern warfare. In expertness and intelligence they exceeded them indefinitely; but these must be well-directed to oppose the massive onslaught of brute force, especially when numerically greater. They are the troops the most apt to criticise, censure, and confound their own general, because they at once discern his want of decision or ability; whereas the Russians never think or reason, but obey with blind pertinacity, marching to death with a stolid determination which extorts the admiration of military enthusiasts. Whether the man-at-arms is most efficient as a reflecting and sentient being or as an unconscious animal, is a question yet disputed by casuists in the belligerent art.

The prospect of France defeating or perhaps resisting so potent an accumulation of enemies was not encouraging; but she had no conception of the real danger which threatened her. She was yet in the exultation of her brilliant successes, and contemplated the renewal of the war with anticipations of further aggrandisement, or at least with perfect security in her impregnability. But at the very outset of the campaign disasters fell thickly on her arms. Jourdan having advanced into Germany with the view of penetrating to the valley of the Danube, was encountered by the Archduke Charles at Stockach on the 25th March 1799, defeated with great loss, and driven precipitately back upon the Rhine, unable longer to keep the field. Scherer, seeking the same day to cross the Adige to co-operate with

* Jomini has related an anecdote expressive of Suwarroff and his tactics. An Austrian general having proposed a reconnaissance upon one occasion, he replied with anger, 'Reconnaissance! Stuff! You can always find your enemy when you really wish it. Form column; charge bayonets; plunge into the centre of the enemy—these are my reconnaissances.'

Jourdan, met so hot a reception from Kray the Austrian general that he was compelled to pause; and renewing his attempt after an interval of indecision, suffered a total defeat at Magnano on the 5th of April, which struck him with such dismay that he took to flight, and amidst the execrations of his soldiers, hurried in a panic across the Mincio, the Oglio, and in fine the Adda. Massena alone gained advantages in Switzerland, assisted by the intrepid Lecourbe, who outshone all competitors in mountain warfare. This induced the Directory to invest Massena with the command of both his own and Jourdan's army, in order that by their junction the French territory might be protected from invasion. Through the vicious practice of the Austrian cabinet, which never gave unlimited discretion to its generals, the Archduke was compelled, contrary to his own judgment, to turn his efforts in the direction of Switzerland rather than push boldly into Alsace, which would have drawn Massena from his strong positions to cover Paris. Thus the French had the benefit of several almost invulnerable lines of defence, behind one of which, that of Zurich and the Limmat, Massena posted his army, and had there the glory of saving France. Meanwhile Suwarroff had arrived in Italy, and assumed the command of the Austro-Russian army. Scherer had resigned the command of the French army to Moreau, who accepted it with a noble patriotism when no longer an object of desire. The Russian general proceeded instantly to force the passage of the Adda, and through the faulty dispositions of Scherer, which Moreau had not had time to rectify, was enabled to cut off and envelop the whole of a French division under Serrurier, who, after fighting as long as he could, laid down his arms at the head of 7000 men. After this calamitous stroke, Moreau had no alternative but to retreat, which he did with composure, evacuating Milan, and recrossing the Po to place himself in a position for effecting a junction with Macdonald, hastening up the Peninsula from Naples. After halting on the Tanaro, he moved on to the slopes of the Apennines, in the direction of Genoa, alarmed by a general insurrection in Piedmont lest his communications with France should be intercepted. Suwarroff followed him, intent to prevent his junction with Macdonald. Upon this the fate of the campaign depended, and Suwarroff displayed considerable judgment in his manœuvres to keep his enemies apart. Masking his movement from Moreau, he suddenly advanced on the Trebbia, and there met Macdonald, who, however, had been joined by Victor with a division from Moreau's army. On the banks of this shallow stream, already immortalised as the scene of one of Hannibal's great victories, a terrible conflict took place between the Russians and French, who fought for three successive days (June 17, 18, and 19) with a fury of which there are few examples. Nearly 30,000 men fell

on this fatal field, from which Macdonald escaped with the loss of half his army, Suwarroff himself having 12,000 killed and wounded. Luckily for France, the latter failed to push his advantage, otherwise he must have driven the French entirely out of Italy. In accordance with the injunctions of the Aulic Council, he suspended his advance until all the fortresses of Lombardy and Piedmont were reduced, and thus gave time to the Directory to reinforce the army. Joubert was now appointed to command it, Moreau again consenting to serve under a superior. It consisted of 40,000 men, eager to avenge the honour of the Republic, and was judged of sufficient strength to resume the offensive. If Moreau had been allowed to do so whilst the Austro-Russian army was scattered in carrying on sieges, it is probable he would have redeemed the fortune of the campaign. But the Directory enjoined him to wait for Joubert, who wasted a whole month in celebrating his nuptials with a young damsel of celebrated attractions. This ill-timed wedding might have entailed the ruin of France. At length arriving at head-quarters in the beginning of August, Joubert immediately moved the army forward, and took post in advance of Novi. But by this time Suwarroff had collected all his forces, to the number of 60,000 men, and was prepared to become himself the assailant. He surprised Joubert on the morning of the 15th August in his position as he was about to leave it, and after an obstinate conflict of several hours, put his army completely to rout. It was one of the most disastrous days in the military annals of France. Joubert himself was killed early in the action, four generals of division fell or were captured, thirty-seven pieces of cannon and several standards were lost, and 10,000 bodies strewed the field of battle and the ravines leading from it. Moreau, however, succeeded in rallying the fugitive troops in front of Gavi, on the Apennines; and not being molested by the conqueror, established himself in a defensible position, resting as a basis on the great fortification of Genoa.

There seemed nothing now to prevent an invasion of France through Savoy; and in truth there was no material obstacle, inasmuch that the southern departments were in the greatest consternation, for the name of Suwarroff and his ferocious legions had become a terror to the stoutest hearts. But again, as in 1793, the extraordinary rapacity of Austria, and her most detestable duplicity, preserved France from the danger which menaced her independence. She began to be jealous of her Russian allies, and wished to get them out of Italy, that she might appropriate the greatest part of it to herself. Paul, with all his deranged intellect, was stirred by generous emotions, and had entered on the war chiefly with the view of restoring Europe to the state it had been in previous to the alterations of the French. Thus he

proposed to reconstitute Venice, and of course reinstate the king of Sardinia in Piedmont. But such intentions were very far from suiting the cabinet of Vienna, who, so far from relinquishing the confiscation of Venice, meditated the additional spoliation of Piedmont and Genoa. Of all the European powers, this cabinet was certainly the meanest and most interested in its motives for the coalition against France. It never had anything in view but its own enrichment, whereas even Pitt had certain more elevated designs apart from the mere selfish one of prostrating an obnoxious rival. Consequently, after the battle of Novi, means were taken to persuade Suwarroff that after his brilliant achievements in Italy, it only remained for him to annihilate the French in Switzerland, where also he would find a more congenial climate and his own Russians under Korsakoff to co-operate with him. Induced by these insidious representations, enforced by positive orders from the Aulic Council, the simple veteran consented to leave Italy and cross the great chain of the Alps into Switzerland. By this new plan the Archduke Charles was to move on the Rhine, and leave Korsakoff and Suwarroff with 50,000 Russians to cope with Massena. A most dangerous displacement of troops was necessary to effect this arrangement, and in the midst of it Massena burst upon Korsakoff, hemmed him into the town of Zurich, and nearly succeeded in capturing the whole of his army. As it was, he suffered a tremendous loss, and was completely ruined. This discomfiture insured that likewise of Suwarroff, who was met in the defiles of the St Gothard by Lecourbe, and had to fight a passage contested inch by inch. He made his way, however, to the Lake of Lucerne, on which he expected to find boats to ferry him across, but none such were prepared; and discharging his wrath in execrations against his perfidious allies, he had no resource but to take the impracticable defile of the Schachtel, abandoning his artillery and baggage to the indefatigable Lecourbe, who hung mercilessly on his rear. Along the precipitous path of this defile only one man could climb at a time, and great numbers slipped into the abyss below. A more arduous or terrible operation has seldom fallen to the lot of an army, and the Russians displayed an indomitable hardihood in effecting it. But they only emerged into fresh peril when they gained the outlet. At Mutten they were surrounded by the French, and had to cut a way through equally frightful passes against superior odds. For ten days the heroic combatants struggled together in deep ravines, on mountain tops, on overhanging crags, on fields of snow, until at last Suwarroff made good his retreat into the Grisons, after surmounting difficulties, fatigues, and dangers such as are scarcely on record. The unconquerable old man carried through with him fully half his army, having left bleaching on

the route the bones of 10,000 men. So deplorable a termination of the campaign, which had promised to end so auspiciously, filled his heart with grief and rage. He quarrelled with the Archduke, retired first into Bavaria, and subsequently to St Petersburg, and there shortly afterwards closed his life, lamenting with his last gasp the disgrace that had fallen on the Russian arms. Paul resented the treacherous conduct of Austria so strongly, that he withdrew his troops, and took no further part in the schemes of the coalition.

The concluding operation of the eventful campaign of 1799 was the ignominious surrender of a British army, which, in conjunction with a Russian force, had invaded Holland. Pitt seems to have been totally regardless of the capacity of the men whom he intrusted with the conduct of expeditions, since although the Duke of York had previously demonstrated his gross incompetency, he was again appointed to lead this enterprise. At first he met with some success from the defective force at the disposition of Brune; but it was of a very transitory character, and he was speedily overthrown, saving the bulk of his army only by means of a capitulation. The troops were allowed to retire on board of ship, and he returned to England once more with a destroyed reputation, redeemed only by the traits he had exhibited of high personal courage. The unfortunate Dutch, as usual, were the great sufferers on the occasion; their entire remaining fleet was carried off by Admiral Mitchell, who received it through the mutiny of the sailors in pledge for the dethroned stadtholder, the exiled Prince of Orange.

The calamities of a country are invariably charged upon the existing government, whether justly imputable to it or not. Especially in the case of military reverses are the public passions apt to be excited, and the more so when inflated notions had been prevalent of great superiority of prowess. In this predicament was the French Directory placed by the disasters sustained in Italy and Germany. The clamour that arose against it from all sides was at once deafening and overwhelming. Every evil, real or imaginary, was laid at its door; and among other accusations alleged against it were some for deeds which had been but recently extolled as egregious merits: such as the conquest of Rome and Naples, the seizure of Malta and Egypt. All parties united in these sweeping denunciations: the Royalists, the Constitutionalists, the Patriots, and the ultra-Revolutionists. These were equally discontented, though upon different grounds. The Royalists were necessarily in opposition to what they considered a usurping authority; the Constitutionalists viewed with displeasure a system founded on violence; the Patriots and Jacobins raised cries of treachery, and demanded the revolutionary measures of 1793. Added to these were the unemployed military,

who swelled the chorus of censure with the loudest voices, and derided with rough sarcasm the idea of France being governed by *lawyers*, to which profession the majority of the Directory belonged. Exposed to this universal anathema, and paralysed by the sense of discredit, the Directory could not venture to interfere with the elections of the year VII. (May 1799) as it had done with those of the preceding year, and they accordingly resulted in the triumphant return of Patriots and Jacobins. In addition to this accession of enemies in the Councils, the Directory lost its ablest member in the person of Rewbell, upon whom the chance fell to retire. By a spontaneous coalition of all parties, Sieyes was nominated to succeed him, he being the man who possessed at the time the highest reputation for ability in France. He was, moreover, known to be inimical not only to the ruling directors, but to the Directorial system altogether; and it was understood that he had some profound combination in his head calculated to displace it with advantage. Hence his appointment itself was a proof of the general desire for a change, which grew more intense as every successive courier from the theatres of war brought intelligence of fresh disasters. As a preliminary to this change, the first step necessary was possession of the government, which could be obtained only by ousting from their seats the three objectionable directors, Larevellière, Merlin, and Treilhard, the last of whom had superseded François (de Neufchâteau). Barras, who was always open to any corrupt influence, deserted his colleagues, and joined in the plot against them. By an ingenious device Treilhard was deposed with some show of legality. The constitution required that a director should have been a year out of the legislature before his appointment, and it was discovered that Treilhard had been installed four days before the expiry of this term. On such ground his election was declared null, though precisely the same objection applied to Sieyes. Gohier, a judge of the supreme court, a man of very slender political talents, was nominated in his stead. The majority being thus secured, urgent means of intimidation were used towards Larevellière and Merlin to induce them voluntarily to resign. The former was of an upright, sturdy, and obstinate character; he resolutely rejected all the overtures made to him, and by his firmness supported the determination of his colleague. But at length perceiving that he was entirely without support, and that his continued refusal would only occasion some dangerous explosion, he yielded to the importunities of his friends, and on the 30th Prairial (18th June) sent in his resignation jointly with Merlin. Thus was dissolved the old Directory, which had governed France for four years, having in that time raised it to a high state of exaltation, but only to see it fall into a corresponding depression. As a government, it unquestionably possessed

few claims to approbation, for it was at once weak and vicious in its administration, and violent in its conduct. It left France in a wretched condition as a country could well be plunged in; yet her evils and misfortunes were not altogether of its creation, but were rather the natural and inevitable results of the Revolution and of the utter dislocation of all the elements of social happiness and prosperity.

This *coup d'état*, known as the Revolution of the 30th Prairial, could do but little to save or ameliorate the country. None but a government of the strongest description was adequate to meet the exigency, and the new Directory was of a looser and weaker texture even than the preceding. The state of things was universally felt as one of transition, as one that could not possibly continue, and men of little capacity or influence were chosen to fill the vacant seats—Roger Ducos, an old Girondin, and Moulins, an unknown general in the army. It was impossible that a government so composed could command respect, or possess force sufficient to infuse order into an administration on the very verge of chaos. Sieyes alone enjoyed any consideration, but his genius was more of the speculative than the practical character; besides, he was of a captious, cynical turn, and as a man of business, his excessive indolence consigned him to nullity. Barras, who had contrived to weather every storm, was nevertheless odious from his vices, and had earned for himself the designation of the *rotten*. Yet a convulsive energy marked the first proceedings of the Councils and Executive after the 30th Prairial. New levies under the law of the conscription were ordered, a forced loan was decreed, and to suppress *chouannerie*, which extended over all the departments of the north and west, the law of *hostages* was passed: a most cruel and unjust enactment, which rendered the relatives of persons suspected of being engaged in disturbances liable to be imprisoned at the will of the local authorities. These were measures of the old revolutionary leaven, adopted in the first flush of excitement; but in neither of the Councils nor in the Directory had the Patriots or Jacobins actually a majority. Nevertheless they threatened to recommence the agitation of '93, and actually revived the Jacobin Club, whilst their newspapers thundered forth with all the violence of language illustrative of that era. Moderate men and the public generally took the alarm at these demonstrations, dreading above all things a return to the system of terror, and it was determined to suppress both the meetings of the club and its organs of the press. For this purpose Barras, who with Sieyes and Ducos formed the moderate majority, proposed the appointment of Fouché, himself an old Jacobin, but of a supple and unscrupulous character, to the ministry of police. The appointment was made, and the new minister ordered to take immediate

steps for dispersing the Jacobins. This Fouché found much less difficulty in effecting than might have been expected; and by stretching the law against persons plotting to the prejudice of the Republic, the publishers and editors of eleven newspapers were thrown into prison, and their presses demolished. Thus interminable was the struggle between the different factions in the community; and a feeling of despair seized upon the minds of all, that order and tranquillity were for ever banished from the soil of France. Anything rather than this incessant turmoil, this never-ending conflict, this perpetual dread and anxiety; royalty, a dictatorship, a military despotism, anything that would give some promise of peace, quiet, and stability. Such was the prevailing sentiment in France after ten years of a Revolution!

In this critical conjuncture of affairs an electric throb shot through the heart of France. Bonaparte had disembarked at Frejus!



CHAPTER XII.

THE CONSULATE—MARENGO—HOHENLINDEN—COPENHAGEN—
UNIVERSAL PEACE—NOVEMBER 1799 TO OCTOBER 1801.

Never did an event more fraught with stupendous consequences occur in the history of the world, nor such a sensation follow its announcement, as the landing of Bonaparte at Frejus upon the morning of the 9th October 1799. He appeared at the moment when his country was menaced with conquest by foreigners, was convulsed by internal dissensions, was ready to sink into positive dissolution—the fate predicted for it by Mirabeau on his death-bed—and instantly the clouds seemed dispelled that hung over it, and a gleam of hope arose, indefinable, yet instinctive, at the magic of a name clothed with such memorable glory. Everywhere on the route to Paris he was received with an enthusiasm bordering on the extravagant; and the inhabitants of the capital awaited his approach with almost painful expectation. But he disappointed their wishes to greet him with a public entry; and eluding even his own relatives, alighted suddenly at his house in the Rue Chantierine unexpected by every one. On the following day he had a public audience of the Directory, who gave him to all appearance a cordial welcome, and congratulated him on his splendid achievements in the East. He said he had left his army in undisturbed possession of Egypt, and had hastened to the succour of France the moment he had heard of the misfortunes that had befallen her. His sword was ever at her service, but he

would never draw it except in defence of the Republic. This was a consolatory assurance to the Directory, who had serious misgivings as to his intentions; and they parted with mutual professions of attachment, testified to the gaping multitude by the Republican accolade—the fraternal embrace.

It was not exactly correct that Bonaparte had left the French army in undisturbed possession of Egypt, since the Grand Vizier in person was leading an immense horde through Syria to expel it, and Sir Sidney Smith kept it intercepted from all communication with France by a rigorous blockade. But by his great victory of the Pyramids he had destroyed the power of the Mamelukes, whilst by the terrible slaughter of Aboukir, just previous to his own departure, he had exterminated the first Turkish army sent to recover Egypt; consequently he might consider the French sufficiently consolidated in the country to justify his leaving it to proceed to the succour of France; and of all the aspersions that have been cast upon him by his numerous detractors, that seems the most groundless which charges him with treachery and baseness in abandoning his army to its fate when he knew its ruin certain. On the contrary, he had no suspicion of the kind, but left to Kleber, whom he appointed to succeed him, detailed instructions for the conduct of the army and the government of the country, promising him prompt succours from France, which his own presence at Paris would enable him the better to insure. His subsequent efforts to send reinforcements and supplies to Egypt attest the sincerity of his assurances, whilst the clandestine manner in which he departed is explained by the natural apprehension that he might be detained by his affrighted soldiers if he proclaimed his purpose. In truth his longer continuance in Egypt was wholly unnecessary, since its conquest was really secured, and he could attempt no further enterprise; whereas France stood in the greatest need of him for her mere preservation. The only fault he committed was in leaving the command to Kleber instead of to Desaix, whom he wished to have in Europe with him, both for the affection he bore him and for the service he might be to him. Still, Kleber had a high military reputation, and was much beloved by the soldiers; the deficiencies of his character for supreme command had not then transpired. The chief danger of the step was that incurred by Bonaparte himself, who ventured to sea with two frigates, well knowing the Mediterranean to be swarming with English cruisers. His escape from them, indeed, was almost miraculous, and may be esteemed a signal instance of the good fortune that continued to attend him until the time came that he had performed his appointed mission, and he was struck with delirium.

No imputation, at all events, was thrown upon his conduct by

those most interested in condemning it—namely, the members of the Directory, whose throne visibly tottered at his presence. Nay, they courted, caressed, consulted him on all the affairs of war and government, as men conscious of his superior capacity to overrule the difficulties of the Republic. He was, in fact, the point of attraction around which all parties centered, each labouring to secure him as its head. But he wisely held aloof from identifying himself with any, keeping in studied reserve that he might seem rather to shun power than seek it with undue ardour. Yet he was fully resolved to seize it, either by overturning the government, or by becoming part of it; holding that the temper of the times was suitable to his usurpation, and that the condition of the country imperiously demanded it. In this he judged correctly, for it was in the mouths of all men, after a saying of Sieyes himself, ‘Away with this accursed régime of brawlers! What we want is a head and a sword.’ Both of these he could offer, each unequalled of its kind, and so it was universally felt and confessed. Nevertheless the form and manner of proceeding were matters of nicety and profound calculation. He could not march, like Cæsar, to the Capitol, and assume the consulship as a devolved right; neither could he, like Cromwell, take a handful of grenadiers and turn the national legislature adrift. He required to observe caution, and to use preparation. Thus from his first arrival he drew around him the generals in Paris, almost all of whom had some cause of quarrel with the Directory, and who looked to him as their appropriate avenger. His brothers, Joseph and Lucien, brought to him deputies, members of the Five Hundred and the Ancients; Talleyrand, Real, Rœderer, bestirred themselves to assure him partisans; even Fouché, minister of police, with his keen sagacity of scent, turned from his falling patrons to assist the rising power. The essential point with him and his advisers was to accomplish the change with as little display of force and as great a show of legality as possible. With this view it was found indispensable to open a negotiation with Sieyes, to whom Bonaparte was greatly indisposed, from a certain jealousy of his name and influence. Sieyes on his part reciprocated this repugnance, for he was as proud and sensitive as the other; and thus an alienation existed between them, which it needed all the plastic art of Talleyrand to compose. Bonaparte had not hesitated to make advances to all whom he recognised as his inferiors; such as Moreau, Bernadotte, Jourdan, Lefebvre, Gohier, Moulins; but with the natural instinct of pride he recoiled from propitiating one who divided with himself the public attention, and might be deemed almost a rival. But the necessity for an approximation was too urgent, since neither was absolutely in a situation to carry out his designs without the other. Sieyes possessed a paramount influence in the Council of the Ancients;

Bonaparte held the requisite sway over the military: thus their conjunction was in the highest degree expedient. Consequently a union was at length brought about between them, and the programme of a conspiracy satisfactorily adjusted.

By the constitution, the Ancients had the power to change the seat of the legislature; and as there were various rumours of risings among the Jacobins, it was agreed to imagine a plot by them against the national representation, under colour of which a decree of translation should be passed to St Cloud. There the Council of Five Hundred might be more conveniently coerced than in Paris, and be made to sanction the measures proposed to be adopted. These measures were the prorogation of the Councils for three months, the abolition of the Directory, and the creation of three consuls in the persons of Bonaparte, Sieyes, and Ducos, invested with authority to frame and promulgate a new constitution. The final arrangements were completed on the night of the 17th Brumaire (8th November), and the Ancients convoked to meet at seven on the morning of the 18th. Bonaparte made dispositions for assembling at his house a large staff of officers, and calling out all the regiments in Paris, under pretence of holding a review. On the 18th, accordingly, the decree of translation was passed by the Ancients, appointing the Councils to meet at St Cloud at twelve on the following day; and by a stretch of prerogative Bonaparte was nominated commander-in-chief of all the troops and National Guards comprised in the seventeenth military division. This latter decree being formally communicated to Bonaparte, it was the signal for him to proceed to the Tuileries, accompanied by the assembled generals and officers, in order to take the customary oath at the bar of the Council. Being introduced, he advanced into the body of the hall and addressed the Ancients in an energetic harangue, vowing that he and his companions in arms all swore to uphold the Republic on the basis of true liberty and the representative system. After this he joined the Committee of the Ancients, sitting in permanence to conduct the Revolution, in which he henceforth took the lead. Here Sieyes and Ducos came to lodge their resignations as directors. It was of importance to procure a third resignation, as then the Directory would be incapable of acting. Moreau was sent with 500 men to blockade the Luxembourg; and after some difficulty, moved by mingled threats and promises, Barras signed his abdication, and quitted Paris for his country house. Moulins and Gohier were inflexible in their refusal to surrender their functions; and after a personal altercation with Bonaparte, were shut up prisoners in their respective apartments at the Luxembourg. Meanwhile Paris was in a ferment of excitement, and the Patriots began to agitate in the faubourgs. The notorious Santerre reappeared on the scene; Bernadotte, Jourdan, and

Augereau, who were all violent democrats, and had resisted Bonaparte's persuasion to join him, took counsel with members of the Five Hundred, and the elements of a formidable opposition were prepared. Sieyes strongly recommended that forty or fifty of the patriot leaders in the Five Hundred should be arrested; but Bonaparte deemed his measures secure, and thought the precaution unnecessary: a confidence he had subsequent occasion to repent. However, the night passed in comparative quiet, being consumed in settling the order of proceeding to be followed on the succeeding day.

During the forenoon of the 19th, the road from Paris to St Cloud presented an extraordinary spectacle. It was thronged with troops, carriages, horsemen, pedestrians, all pressing forward indiscriminately to the decisive scene of action, where the Revolution was to undergo one more, and perhaps final phase. Bonaparte appointed Murat to command the troops around St Cloud, who amounted to about 5000 men. Accidental circumstances have often the most important consequences in critical conjunctures. It happened that the workmen had not been able to get ready the apartments in which the Councils were to assemble, and for two hours the deputies were kept perambulating in the gardens of the palace, during which time they conferred together and discussed with vehemence the projects in meditation. The members of the Ancients were asked why they had transferred the legislative body to St Cloud, and what were the intentions they entertained. These faltered in their replies, and gave evasive reasons; but when some hinted that the constitution of the year III. was proved to be a failure, and that a stronger government was requisite, so general an expression of dissent and indignation burst forth, that the partisans of the movement were staggered, and began to fear they had gone too far. Thus indecision and apprehension were infused among the Ancients, whereas the majority of the Five Hundred were animated with a determined spirit of resistance. Fortunately for the cause of the conspirators, Lucien Bonaparte was president of the latter body, otherwise their scheme would in all probability have failed. Upon its assembling, Gaudin, as had been preconcerted, moved the appointment of a committee to report on the dangers of the country, which was the signal for a most furious outbreak. Gaudin was forcibly dragged from the tribune, and the members started to their feet, vociferating with fierce gestures, '*The Constitution or death! No dictatorship! Down with the dictators!*' Amidst the tumult a deputy moved that an oath of fidelity to the constitution of the year III. should be taken, which was at once carried, with the addition that every member should take it individually in the tribune. Lucien himself was obliged to set the example, and the swearing continued for upwards of two

hours amidst acclamations and uproarious agitation. The crisis was imminent; by instant imperative action only could the blow be effected. Augereau and Jourdan were on the ground prepared to address the troops if they gave any indication of wavering. Bonaparte and Sieyes consulted: it was resolved that no alternative remained but to resort to direct military intimidation. The former proceeded towards the palace, and on the way encountered Augereau. 'Ha!' cried the latter, 'you seem in a pleasant predicament!' 'Affairs were in a far worse state at Arcola,' Bonaparte retorted. He entered the hall of the Ancients, and with great emotion ejaculated to them a few broken but stimulating sentences. He was heard with applause, and invited to partake the honours of the sitting. He then repaired to the Five Hundred, from whom he met with a very different reception. The moment he appeared at the door he was assailed with imprecations. Leaving some grenadiers at the entrance, he advanced up the chamber; but several deputies rushed upon him, surrounded him, and apostrophised him with vehemence. 'What!' they exclaimed, 'is it for this you have conquered? All your laurels are tarnished! Your glory is converted to infamy! Respect the temple of the laws! Begone—begone!' Bonaparte quailed at this boisterous treatment, these astounding interpellations, and turned deadly pale. The grenadiers, believing him in danger, ran forward and rescued him from his infuriated aggressors. Daggers it is said were brandished, but they were certainly not used. One of the grenadiers had his clothes torn, which sufficed to warrant the assertion. Remounting his horse, Bonaparte rode along the lines, and told the soldiers that in his endeavour to save the Republic his life had been attempted by assassins. They answered him with shouts of vengeance and attachment; reassuring cries greeted him from all sides of '*Long live Bonaparte! Bonaparte for ever!*'

The Council of Five Hundred only wanted leaders to have won the victory perhaps; as it was, Lucien Bonaparte monopolised the glory of the day. He preserved his firmness and presence of mind amid all the tumult and danger of the scene. The deputies cried with vehemence, '*Down with the tyrant! Outlaw him! outlaw him!*' and insisted that the president should put the decree of outlawry to the vote. A similar decree had ruined Robespierre, and might have proved equally efficacious in the present instance. Lucien refused to put the question. 'Wretches!' he exclaimed, 'would you have me outlaw my own brother? I vacate the chair, and proceed to the bar to defend him you accuse!' At this moment Bonaparte learnt what was passing in the Council; and fearing for his brother's safety, sent ten grenadiers to bring him out of the hall. These effected the object, and Lucien immediately mounted on horseback. Traversing the ranks with his

brother, he addressed the troops in an animated strain. 'The Council of Five Hundred is dissolved,' he said to them: 'it is I who declare it to you! Assassins have invaded the hall of its sittings, and have done violence to the majority: I summon you to march to its deliverance!' The word was given to advance; Murat and Leclerc led on the grenadiers, and rushed with fixed bayonets into the hall. The members uttered terrific cries upon their appearance; but the officers waved their swords, and shouted '*Forward, grenadiers!*' Charging into the midst of the assembled legislators, they put them to flight in all directions through doors, corridors, windows, and in a few moments not a single representative was left on the ground. Lucien repaired to the hall of the Ancients to justify his conduct before them, which, they having willing ears, he had little difficulty in doing; and some fifty members of the Five Hundred being reassembled, partisans of the movement, the intended decrees were passed; and about eleven at night, the plot being consummated, the actors in this memorable drama hastily separated, as if anxious to get away from the scene of the outrage. The Councils were prorogued to the 1st Ventose (20th February). Bonaparte, Sieyes, and Ducos were appointed Provisional Consuls, with full executive power; and two committees of the Councils were nominated to give their measures a legislative sanction, and to digest with them a new constitution for France.

Such was the celebrated revolution of the 18th Brumaire, which is generally held to terminate the Revolution of 1789, since it introduced the absolute government of a single man; but in reality it is not to be so considered, inasmuch as the Consulate and Empire were only phases of the same great convulsion variously modulated, but subsiding only in the ultimate restoration of the Bourbons by the combined effort of all Europe. It from the first threw the whole authority of the State into the hands of Bonaparte. Sieyes made a faint struggle against his ascendancy, but seeing how hopeless was the attempt, at once abandoned it. He surrendered with a good grace, saying to Talleyrand with an expressive gesture, 'We have got a master, who, knowing how, both can and will do everything.'* Nevertheless, whilst Bonaparte exercised the important functions of government, to Sieyes was assigned the appropriate task of adumbrating a constitution, which it was supposed he had already revolved in his mind. Such was the fact; but as he had not committed his ideas to paper, it was only in successive gestations that his conception was fully wrung from him. It proved to be the most singular that ever occurred to the wit of man, but marked, notwithstanding, by great

* It is impossible to give the idiomatic force of this expression as in French—'Nous avons un maitre qui sait tout faire, qui peut tout faire et qui veut tout faire.'

profundity of thought. A *mixed* government was the great object in view, wherein the primary elements of royalty, aristocracy, and democracy should be mingled and adroitly poised, the lessons of the past having taught that to none of these exclusively can the government of a country be safely or equitably committed. But royalty and aristocracy were completely defunct in France; how, then, were they to be revived? Not in name certainly, for that would be to belie the Revolution; but they might be in substance, sufficient for the purpose of a nice political adjustment. Hence the idea of a Council of State, a Senate, a Legislative Body, and a Tribunate, all invested with different functions, and acting as checks on each other. The Council of State was to initiate laws; the Tribunate publicly to discuss them, and afterwards oppose or support them by orators before the Legislative Body against orators from the Council of State; the Legislative Body silently to vote or reject them; the Senate was to sit in judgment on the others, and annul their acts if unconstitutional. The executive power was to be vested in ministers appointed by two Consuls, the one of peace, and the other of war, who were in their turn to be chosen by a *Grand Elector*, the ostensible head of the State, but wholly destitute of direct authority. All functionaries were to be selected from certain lists of notability, formed in the first instance by the universal suffrage of all males above twenty-one, and successively abbreviated by decimations into departmental and national lists, the latter of which would not contain above 5000 or 6000 names, from whom alone the members of the executive and legislative powers could be taken. Thus a representation was apparently given to the mass of the people, but of so indirect a nature, as to be almost illusory, since they no longer appointed deputies or delegates, but simply persons eligible to be such, who were afterwards selected by the Senate. Whilst thus guarding against the danger of popular encroachment, equal caution was observed against the undue ambition of the supreme dignitary, the Grand Elector, whom the Senate might at any time depose by simply *absorbing* him within its own fold, when, in common with the other senators, he became incapable of active duties. Such was the complicated machine invented by Sieyès for fulfilling that essential but most difficult task of establishing institutions suitable to a great nation, whereon a rational and stable freedom may be reared, at once preservative, regenerative, and expansive. So inveterate are the passions of men, that they must be fenced round by an infinity of artificial checks to maintain an equilibrium between the different classes of a community, tending to secure the common advantage of all, and the substantial blessings of a good government.

So purely artistical a combination was inapplicable to any country at any stage of its existence, but much more so to France

in its present state of depression, confusion, and aberration. Bonaparte, with his sound practical sense and discrimination, at a glance detected all its defects, and ridiculed it with the vivacity of language peculiar to him when feeling strongly. In truth he perceived no place under it for himself, since he certainly would not admit of a superior, and he could not brook the nonentity of M. Sieyes's Grand Elector. Consequently an open rupture occurred between him and Sieyes, who clung to the whole of his system with the tenacity and egotism of a dogmatist. By the mediation of Talleyrand and Rœderer, however, a reconciliation was effected, and a compromise struck between them, by which the executive part of the scheme was wholly altered. A strong government, even to the pitch of a dictatorship, was the absolute exigency of the time; and this Sieyes himself was at length brought to acknowledge. Still, it was equally necessary that such a dictatorship should be disguised as much as possible under a republican mask, and that the sovereignty should be ostensibly shared by more than one person. Hence, although no doubt existed as to who alone was competent to fill the office of head of the State, it was resolved that he should have two colleagues, subordinate to him, but still bearing the same name. The illustrious title of the Roman magistrates, already provisionally assumed, was continued, and Bonaparte nominated to be FIRST CONSUL. As it was incompatible with Sieyes's position, and also with his temper, to play a subservient part, he withdrew his pretensions to be Second Consul, which dignity was allotted to Cambacères, a distinguished juriconsult, a man of that sagacity, pliability, and practical expertness which Bonaparte most liked in his instruments. Roger Ducos gave way with his patron Sieyes; and Lebrun, an old assistant of Maupeou, a man known for his enlightened views and his moderation, was called to be Third Consul. The appointment of ministers, generals, judges, ambassadors, and all other high functionaries, was vested in the First Consul solely, as indeed the whole executive power of the State. He enjoyed an income of 500,000 francs (£20,000), his two colleagues one of 150,000 francs (£6000) each, and all three were to reside in the palace of the Tuileries. Sieyes was rewarded with the gift of a national estate; and, as is alleged, he and Ducos divided between them a sum of 800,000 francs, a secret fund of the late Directory; the astute abbé, however, contriving to satisfy his simple participant with less than a fourth of the amount.*

In all other respects Sieyes's plan of a constitution was adhered to: the bodies he proposed were all established—namely, the

* This singular anecdote would seem to be authentic, as it is mentioned by both Napoleon and Gohier. Mr Alison makes very merry with the rapacious abbé on the occasion.—Vol. vii. p. 123. ed 1847.

Council of State, the Senate, the Legislative Body, and the Tribune; but as great impatience was manifested for the formation of a settled government, the lists of notability were not waited for, and the nomination of the Senate was devolved on Sieyès, Dncos, Cambacères, and Lebrun, Bonaparte himself being unacquainted with the men of the Revolution, who alone were designed to compose the national councils. When the Senate, consisting of sixty members, was formed, it would execute the task of appointing the 300 members of the Legislative Body, and the 100 of the Tribune. The Council of State belonging rather to the executive branch of the government, its members were appointed by the Consuls. Ample salaries were attached to all these functions: the Senators received 25,000 francs yearly (£1000), the Legislators 10,000 (£400), the Tribunes 15,000 (£600), the Councillors of State 25,000 (£1000). Thus, it must be confessed, enticing bribes were held out for partisans to declare loudly in behalf of a system so prolific of lucrative employments, and to tender a conspicuous allegiance to the new government. The entire scheme was promulgated in a proclamation to the nation on the 15th December 1799, and diffused a universal joy and enthusiasm. With the exception of the more sour and unrelenting Jacobins, a very small minority in the country, it was hailed by all with hope and confidence, such being the feeling of approbation towards it, that upwards of 3,000,000 votes were recorded in its favour; a number very far exceeding any given for previous constitutions.

Behold, then, Napoleon Bonaparte undisputed master of the noble empire of France; he the younger son of a decayed noble on the petty island of Corsica, which only a few months previous to his birth had become for the first time a French dependency; he who had just completed his thirtieth year, and yet filled the universe with his renown! With him henceforth its destinies were identified. The character of his government followed the bent of his individual genius. It was that emphatically of an *organiser*, on the sound and admirable principle of fusion, for he was personally free from connection or sympathy with any of the factions that had so long distracted the Republic. He made it his object to gather around him the men who had distinguished themselves for talents of various kinds in the course of the Revolution, whatever their previous opinions might have been, provided only that they harmonised with the new spirit he sought to give the era, and abjured extreme doctrines either political or social. Thus in his appointment of ministers and councillors of state, he consulted only the peculiar fitness of individuals for their respective situations, and compounded a government almost unrivalled for the multifariousness of ability comprised within it. Possessing in a supereminent degree the faculty of disci-

minating characters and capacities, in itself one of the greatest qualities of the human mind, he made his selections with the happiest effect, and soon operated an extraordinary change in the condition of the country. First he applied himself to that most indispensable necessity of states—an adjustment of the finances; and by his well-considered measures, restored such confidence amongst capitalists, that he obtained a loan of 12,000,000 francs (£500,000), paid in specie, to meet the immediate wants of the occasion: a proof the most emphatic that could be given of the general idea entertained of the superior excellence and stability of the Consular government. Next he laboured to impel, and yet guide, that spirit of reaction from revolutionary dogmas which it was his desire and aim practically to incarnate. He relaxed all the severe laws against emigrants and their relatives, recalled from exile the proscripts of different epochs, restored the institution of Sunday so far as to allow the services of the Christian religion to be performed in churches on that day, relieved the priests from the obligation of swearing to the civil constitution of the clergy, and substituted in place of that repugnant oath a simple promise to obey the laws of the land. The banditti who infested the highways throughout the country, to the very gates of Paris, he extirpated by flying columns of gendarmerie; the roads which had been left unrepaired during all the years of the Revolution he took prompt measures to reconstruct; the canals which had been choked up or left unfinished he caused to be cleared and completed; the manufactures which had fallen into almost utter decay he sought to revive by all possible encouragements; in fine, the civil war whose embers still smouldered in La Vendée, Brittany, and Normandy, he succeeded in finally extinguishing; and by personal interviews with the Royalist chiefs, whom he invited to Paris for the purpose, even prevailed on many of them to enter the service of the Republic. Moreover, the internal administration of France was entirely remodelled, and both in civil, judicial, and fiscal matters, the principle of centralisation was substituted for the loose local jurisdictions which had hitherto prevailed. The creation of prefects, subprefects, and mayors, graduated in each department, and immediately dependent on the ministry of the interior, supplied in civil affairs the connecting link radiating from a common centre to the minutest subdivisions; the establishment of local judicatories, courts of appeal seated in the old parliamentary cities, and a supreme tribunal erected at Paris called the Court of Cassation, having a predominate jurisdiction over the whole territory, afforded the machinery of an admirable judicial organisation, insuring the dispensation of at once cheap, speedy, and certain justice; the institution of receivers general, directors, assessors, and controllers, all acting in regu-

lated subserviency, and as mutual checks, superseded with advantage the scattered and numerous cantonal commissioners, who had previously managed the concerns of taxation, and insured an agency the most exact and effective ever devised for the assessment, collection, and transmission of the imposts leviable on a community.

Never did one man effect so wondrous an amelioration in the state of a country, as Bonaparte within the first six months of his consulate in France. To anarchy, distrust, and anxiety, had succeeded order, confidence, and assurance. Aided undoubtedly by the able counsellors whom he had clustered around him, and more especially by the public alacrity to second his efforts for the restoration of order, yet his alone was the genius, the intelligence, the perseverance, which gave the essential impetus. Without him, all again had relapsed into pristine chaos. Incessantly in action, presiding at debates in the Council of State, engaged in discussions with practical men of all professions, dictating instructions and despatches, prosecuting tours of inspection, passing troops in review, his industry and indefatigability was something more than human. His understanding embraced all topics with an intuitive comprehension which struck his associates in the toils of government with awe and admiration. The records of the Council of State, preserved by Thibeaudeau in his invaluable history,* reveal in him an acuteness, extent of information, and soundness of judgment on every social and political question canvassed before that body, which in so young a man, hitherto engrossed in the distracting pursuits of a military life, may well appear surprising. But it was chiefly through decision of character, firmness of purpose, and insatiability of results that he prevailed over every obstacle, imparted an unceasing stimulus to each branch of the administration, and moulded men into the ardent and energetic instruments of his designs. These were at this time solely directed to the resuscitation of France from an abyss of moral and physical prostration, mingled doubtless with views of personal aggrandisement inseparable from the task itself, and the realisation of which might be the legitimate reward of success. Hence it is with justice that panegyrists delight to dwell on this portion of his career, so purely beneficent may it be represented, so redolent of good, so unpolluted with evil. Still, two ugly spots disfigured its brightness. The press was enchained under the most rigorous of censorship, and society was tormented by the innumerable horde of spies maintained by the political and secret police. Assuredly some fetters on the licentiousness of the press had been shown to be too necessary; but apart from that considera-

* *'Histoire de France pendant la Révolution et l'Empire,'* 10 vols.; and *'Mémoires sur le Consulat.'*

tion, the temper of Bonaparte, in its nature essentially despotic, could not brook public criticism on his acts, and it was one of his weaknesses to wince under such inflictions with the most fretful irritability. The official ministry of police was under the charge of Fouché, a person of that cunning and sagacious character which fitted him for such a duty; but the First Consul distrusted him, for he had an instinctive horror of *bad men*, and one of such he knew Fouché to be. Consequently, unknown, as he thought, to that functionary, he instituted a secret police more immediately dependent on himself, and which was under the direction, first of Duroc, his aid-de-camp, and secondly of Junot, governor of Paris. Each department had its legion of agents employed, not only in Paris, but throughout the Republic, whose rival manœuvres and miserable devices to gain information, to entrap the unwary, to deceive, puzzle, or outwit each other, tend to excite equal indignation and contempt. Not but that an organised detective police was requisite at a time when Royalists and Jacobins were both plotting against the new government; even a ramified system of espionage was defensible under such circumstances; the objection lies to the detestable means used for attaining the end proposed, and the arbitrary powers usurped in their exercise. Thus, although the Consular government was in its general character clement, amalgamating, and reparatory, it sternly suppressed all liberty of expression or freedom of movement; the only place in which the voice of censure or expostulation could be raised being the Tribune, whose members alone had the right of speech. And in the first legislative session, opened on the 1st January 1800, some of them took advantage of this franchise, and assailed the First Consul in terms of vituperation. No serious opposition, however, was offered to any of the measures submitted from the Council of State; but Bonaparte was much exasperated, and henceforth viewed the Tribune with undisguised aversion. The Legislative Body silently voted by immense majorities the various propositions of government, and passed them into laws. The Conservative Senate sat in dignified watchfulness to guard lest any infringement of the Constitution should be perpetrated. The session lasted four months, at the end of which time these component effigies of a parliament dissolved, to recreate for the prescribed interval of vacation.

But it was not enough to reanimate the paralysed spirit of society in France herself; her external relations and military position demanded equally pressing attention. Accordingly, one of the first acts of Bonaparte after the promulgation of the Constitution was to notify his accession to the chief magistracy of the Republic to the two powers at war with France, and to make to them direct overtures of peace. These two powers were Great Britain and Austria; and discarding the usual forms of diplomatic in-

ercourse, he addressed to their respective monarchs a personal appeal, couched in the graphic and impressive language peculiar to him, imploring them to put an end to the horrors of a war which threatened to devour the universe. This was a very masterly piece of policy on his part. He had no desire for peace; it was clearly his interest and that of France to continue the war with the view of retrieving the losses and disgrace of the last campaign, which was the more feasible through the retirement of the Russians from the allied camp.* But it caused very great embarrassment to the courts of the coalesced belligerents. Pitt and Thugut, the Austrian minister, were united in opinion that France was utterly exhausted, and that in another campaign she must be definitively prostrated. Consequently they were ardent in their purpose to prosecute the war, and yet it was difficult to elude an immediate provocative to peace. Pitt in this emergency revived a pretence which he had before advanced and deserted as suited his varying policy—namely, that the government of France presented no guarantee for the stability of any peace that might be made with it; and he intimated, moreover, that the restoration of the Bourbons seemed alone likely to afford that guarantee. This was certainly one of the shallowest pretexts for perpetuating hostilities that was ever protruded by a statesman: first, because he had himself belied it by negotiating twice with the Directory; and secondly, because with those very Bourbons England had been fighting for three-fourths of the expiring century. The First Consul replied through the medium of his minister for foreign affairs, Talleyrand, in a temperate argument, wherein, after deprecating the use of irritating topics, he averred that it would be equally consistent with sense for him to refuse any accommodation with England until she had restored the Stuarts to her throne. To this Pitt answered by a very angry effusion, in which he stated that England did not carry on war for the restoration of the Bourbons, but ‘to secure the stability of all governments:’ a new allegation improvised for the nonce. Austria likewise declined, in more courteous communications, to open negotiations for peace; and thus Bonaparte had all the credit of appearing to be forced to prolong a war which he had every motive to continue. It is not likely, even if negotiations had been opened, that a peace would have ensued at this time; the pretensions of the allies would have been totally incompatible with those of the First Consul; but the absolute refusal to treat, evinces the headlong passion and complete blindness with which the allies carried on the war, since the opportunity was the most favourable that could be conceived for terminating it advantageously to the permanent tranquillity of Europe. In truth Pitt had as little conception of

* This fact, which was otherwise palpable enough, he has himself avowed in his memoirs dictated at St Helena.—Vol. v. p. 35, Eng. ed.

the real nature of the adversary he now defied, as he had six years before of the force of a nation aroused to defend its existence. It was the fashion with him and his party to shut their eyes wilfully and steadfastly to the merits and qualities of an antagonist; hence Bonaparte was not only foully abused by them and their organs, but actually derided as a mere minion of fortune, a vulgar upstart, to be trundled down like a nine-pin. The British aristocracy was bent on crushing the Revolution, and nothing less would satisfy it; accordingly, in its stubborn and malignant pride, it helped to prepare the way for its own most grievous humiliation, and the subsequent imminent perils to which the country it ruled was exposed.

Enjoying thus in the eyes of the world the lustre of a rejected suitor for anity, with which the stupidity and rancour of his enemies had enshrined him, the plans and preparations of the First Consul for the coming campaign brought into strong relief all the chief qualities of his mind. The plan he formed was one of the boldest and most sagacious recorded in history, and his preparations were conducted with an energy, promptitude, precision, and secrecy, such as have scarcely any parallel. Almost destitute as he was of money, he had no alternative but to have recourse, like preceding governments, to temporary expedients derived from hypothecations on the national domains, of which there were estimated to be about 400,000,000 francs' worth yet undisposed of, and forced requisitions. By these means he was enabled to send some succours to the armies, which were literally perishing of famine. The Army of Italy was reduced, after the battles of Novi and the Trebbia, to less than 40,000 men; and having been driven into the Apennines, had suffered incredible hardships during the winter from want of food, clothing, medicines, and every necessary. The armies of Helvetia and the Rhine had undergone similar privations, but not to so great an extent as that of Italy, or rather that of Liguria, as it was now more modestly termed. The soldiers composing these armies were all veterans of the first order; and although desertions were undoubtedly frequent, they had stuck to their colours with an admirable constancy under the heaviest temptations to disband. The elevation of Bonaparte to supreme power had been far from agreeable to the armies of the Rhine and Helvetia, or to the commander of the latter—Massena. A jealousy amounting almost to animosity had always existed between the military engaged on the Rhine and those engaged in Italy, and consequently the great commander of the latter was not popular among the former. Hence Bonaparte had taken immediate measures to obviate any hostile manifestation by a change of generals, and uniting the two armies into one, had given it to Moreau under the imposing title of the Army of Germany. On the other hand, the Army of Liguria was

given to Massena, whose talents peculiarly fitted him for such a scene of warfare. A third army was to be formed, called the Army of Reserve, to be kept at disposal, and used for striking a decisive blow when the opportunity offered. A levy of 100,000 conscripts having been voted by the Legislative Body, the First Consul was enabled to send reinforcements of trained soldiers to the frontier, and thus the force under Moreau was raised to 150,000 men, of whom 100,000 were available for active service. The Austrian army was of about equal strength, and commanded by Marshal Kray, the Archduke Charles having fallen into disgrace by advising the conclusion of a peace. On the side of Italy, Massena was very differently situated. Not a single recruit was sent to him, and he was left with 40,000 starved and ragged troops to contend against General Melas at the head of 120,000 Imperialists in the very best condition moral and physical. But he had the advantage of mountainous positions to defend, and Bonaparte judged that he might contrive to hold out and prevent an invasion of France sufficiently long to allow him to execute his grand design. In this design he contemplated nothing less than the total destruction of the Austrian army in Italy.

Owing to the belief of the allies in the paralysed condition of France, it was easy for him to deceive them as to the amount of his preparations. Thus he announced the muster of his Army of Reserve at Dijon, as if naturally enough with a view to reinforce Massena, or resist an invasion of Provence. But he collected there only a few invalid and volunteer companies, with some conscripts and officers to drill them, insomuch that this Army of Reserve shortly became the standing joke of Europe. The accounts of it transmitted by spies to the allied governments tallied so exactly with their previous notions, and flattered their hopes so agreeably, that they gave the readiest credence to them, and chuckled exceedingly at so signal a proof of the First Consul's decrepitude. Endless were the sarcasms launched at London and Vienna touching the phantom Army of Reserve, and caricaturists represented it under the likeness of a soldier with a wooden leg led by a child puffing bubbles into the air. Bonaparte encouraged this hilarity and exuberant gratulation, well content to be the butt of his enemies' ridicule, so that he lulled them more effectually into a false security. Meanwhile, silently, and by different routes, without attracting the least observation, he was collecting at Geneva and Lausanne his real Army of Reserve, draughting for that purpose the disposable forces in the late insurgent provinces, joined with others from Holland and various quarters. He thus assembled by the end of April 1800 an army of 40,000 men, with sixty pieces of artillery, and rations of biscuit and brandy for a fortnight, the existence of the same being wholly unknown

to the allies. Now was to be demonstrated the enormous advantage accruing to France from her military occupation of Switzerland, already exemplified, indeed, in the previous campaign. That country being almost unassailable on the German or Italian sides, stood like a massive promontory, as it were, between the two great armies of Austria, barring all communication between them, and affording facilities to the French for attacking either of them in flank or rear. By rapidly concentrating his army towards Constance, Moreau might cross the Rhine and take Kray in flank with an overwhelming force; or the Army of Reserve might scale the chain of the Alps, and plunge into Central Italy behind Melas engaged in the Apennines. Both of these projects it was the design of the First Consul to execute. It was the part of Moreau first to commence operations, since it was essential that Kray should be driven back into Germany before the descent on Italy could be safely hazarded. But that general, cautious almost to timidity, shrank from attempting so bold a movement as the one prescribed by the First Consul; he preferred another of his own, which was attended with great results, but not with the immense effects that might otherwise have ensued. It is always a question in war whether audacity or circumspection be the better quality; the one may lead to more decisive consequences when successful, the latter insures greater safety and certainty. Like Marcellus and Fabius of old, Bonaparte and Moreau were the representatives of the opposite systems in modern times: the sword and the shield might still be their appropriate types. Thus Moreau crossed the Rhine at four points instead of one—at Strasburg, Brisach, Basle, and Schaffhausen—extending over a line more than fifteen leagues in extent. He thus puzzled Kray as to the direction in which he proposed to attack, but by such dissemination he undoubtedly exposed himself to be crushed on any given point. Happily he was allowed to concentrate his forces towards the Lake of Constance, in accordance with the original plan of the First Consul; and by the 1st of May, he was in a position to assume the offensive. Advancing on Stockach, he encountered his adversary there prepared to receive him. After an obstinate and bloody engagement, the Austrians were driven from the field; but they halted at Moeskirch, whence Moreau again dislodged them on the 5th May, and on the following day compelled them to cross the Danube. Pursuing his success ably, but deliberately, he ultimately drove Kray to take refuge in the intrenched camp of Ulm, which being too strong to storm, he quietly sat down to beleaguer. If, therefore, he had failed to accomplish all the First Consul had desired, he had nevertheless conquered his opponent, reduced him to fall back into the centre of Germany, and made practicable the stupendous enterprise contemplated on Italy.

This enterprise the First Consul was impatient to commence,

Massena, after maintaining sundry heroic combats, had been at last cut in two, and driven with half his army into Genoa, where he was closely besieged by the exulting host of Austrians. As soon, therefore, as the tidings of Moreau's first successes reached Paris, Bonaparte hastened his departure for Switzerland. First proceeding to Dijon, to prolong the delusion of his enemies, he posted with all speed to Geneva, which city he reached on the 12th May. Here everything had been already prepared by his careful foresight for immediately entering on action. Engineers had surveyed all the routes into Italy, and reported them to be difficult, but not absolutely impracticable. In order to debouch completely into the rear of the Austrians, Bonaparte decided to pass the bulk of his army over the Great St Bernard, which was not then traversed by the road he himself subsequently constructed. Detachments were to cross at the same time Mount Cenis and the Little St Bernard, whilst a division of 15,000 men from the Army of Germany was to penetrate by the St Gothard. These all meeting in the plains of Lombardy would form a mass of above 60,000 men to intercept Melas from Austria, and compel him either to surrender or to fight a desperate battle to regain his communications. But the operation of scaling these prodigious eminences with all the heavy *materiel* of an army, covered as they were with snow, and overhung with ever-falling avalanches, was a task the most arduous that could be undertaken; since the similar exploit of Hannibal, which has rendered his name so famous in history, sinks in the comparison of difficulty, as he had no artillery to transport. Having satisfied himself, however, that it was *possible*, the First Consul hesitated not to attempt it. Pushing his army across the Lake of Geneva, he established himself at Martigny, near the foot of the mountain, to superintend in person the passage of the troops. A division was appointed to cross each day, and on the morning of the 15th Lannes led the way, starting immediately after midnight, in order to effect the transit before the sun attained sufficient heat to melt the snow. The soldiers climbed the precipitous heights with songs of gladness; and when, having reached the summit of the pass, they found refreshments provided for them by the monks of the convent, so celebrated for their services to travellers, and who had been supplied with money and provisions by Bonaparte, they burst into acclamations, and abandoned themselves to joy. Thus the infantry crossed the chain with comparative facility; to the cavalry the task was more difficult and hazardous, from the sliding of their horses down the reverse declivity. But the artillery presented the main obstacle. It was found necessary to take the guns from their carriages and enclose them between hollowed trees, which were dragged by peasants, who were promised a reward of 1000 francs for each gun they carried over the

mountain. They soon grew tired of the work, however, highly as it was remunerated; and nothing remained but for the soldiers to drag the cannon themselves. This they cheerfully volunteered to do; and in bands of 100 men, animated by the exhilarating tones of martial music, they toiled up the steep ascent with their ponderous burden, and safely delivered it on the other side amid shouts of triumph. All having at length passed, Bonaparte himself ascended on the morning of the 20th, mounted on a mule, and clad in a large gray cloak, musing thoughtfully as he progressed to his high destinies, and listening abstractedly to the simple tale of his guide, who, unconscious of the illustrious personage he convoyed, related with artless fervour the homely incidents of his rustic life. On reaching the hospital of the charitable monks, he wrote an order upon the commissary-general of the army, which he intrusted to the peasant to deliver: it was for a sum of money to enable the fortunate mountaineer to realise the fond craving of his heart—to marry the girl he loved, refused him by obdurate parents because of the poverty which stained his pretensions.

The sudden apparition of the French army down the rugged gorges of the Alpine chain occasioned an amazement throughout Italy and Europe as great as if a host had fallen from the skies. Knowing full well the value of time in a surprise, Bonaparte advanced straightway to Milan, which he entered amid the rapturous acclamations of the inhabitants on the 2d of June. The yoke of Austria had been at all times hateful to the people of Lombardy, but it was especially so at the present moment, from the ruthless vengeance she had wreaked on all the partisans of the late Republic. Consequently they everywhere received the French as deliverers, and at once arose in insurrection against their former masters. Thus the situation of General Melas became extremely critical. His army was divided into two principal masses—one employed in prosecuting the siege of Genoa, the other in attempting to force the passage of the Var, defended by Suchet, Massena's second in command. Hence he was unable to concentrate his forces with sufficient rapidity to attack Bonaparte before the latter could seize the course of the Po, the formidable barrier which lay between him and the route to Friuli or the Tyrol. In truth the First Consul lost not a moment in occupying that important line and all the towns upon it, in which he found vast magazines of provisions and military stores. But he failed, nevertheless, in saving Massena from the necessity of surrendering Genoa. After a siege almost unexampled for the heroism of the defence, in which he was reduced to live on the most loathsome food, Massena capitulated when the last morsel of anything edible was consumed, and gained from his admiring foes highly honourable conditions. The conquest at

the same time was a very ephemeral one to the Austrians, and indeed was injurious to them, inasmuch as the garrison they left in Genoa diminished the strength of the active army with which they were to effect their rescue. This army was sadly attenuated since the opening of the campaign. From the great losses inflicted on it by Massena and Suchet, and from the number of fortresses requiring garrisons, it could not muster above 40,000 men on a field of battle. This was the number Melas actually assembled at Alessandria when he learnt the full extent of the danger that threatened him in the rear. Contrary to his usual practice, Bonaparte, on the other hand, had his troops considerably scattered, which was owing to the doubts he entertained as to the route the Austrian general might take in his endeavour to escape. Three were at his option, but the more direct one was across the Po at Placenza; and upon that point, accordingly, Bonaparte accumulated his principal force. He even pushed beyond it on the road to Alessandria, in which movement Lannes encountered the advanced body of the Austrians, and maintained against superior odds the sanguinary conflict of Montebello. After this the French advanced across the Scrivia, and debouched into the extensive plain lying between that stream and the Bormida, since celebrated as the field of Marengo. Being unable to learn anything positive about the Austrian army, the First Consul began to be alarmed lest it had retreated into the Apennines with the view of reaching the Lower Po by a detour; and he detached Desaix with a division towards Novi, to act in the event of such a contingency having occurred. But in reality, after an anxious deliberation, the Austrian generals had resolved to boldly face the danger, and fight a battle for their deliverance. Consequently the very next morning, being the 14th June, they crossed the Bormida with all their forces, and executed upon Bonaparte one of the most complete surprises ever experienced perhaps by any commander in the open field.

The fortune of the campaign might have been signally reversed on this eventful day, and the destinies of the world fundamentally changed. But the star of Bonaparte was too high in the ascendant. In the early part of the day the French were defeated on all points, and almost driven from the field, when at this critical moment Desaix arrived, having returned as soon as he heard the firing, without waiting for orders. By this promptitude he saved the glory of France, and converted a defeat into a victory; at the cost, however, of his own life, gloriously lost at the head of his troops. Upon his appearance, Bonaparte eagerly flew to meet him, and asked his opinion as to continuing the combat. 'It is now three o'clock,' said Desaix, looking at his watch; 'a battle has been lost, but there is yet time to gain another.' The First Consul shook him by the hand, and in a moment dispositions

were made for renewing the battle. The Austrians were advancing confidently across the plain, supposing the victory won; Melas himself, whom old age unfitted to bear fatigue, had returned to Alessandria. Along the whole line the charge was sounded; Desaix heads the attack, but falls at the very first onset; Kellermann with the cavalry plunges into the very thickest of the enemy's battalions, pierces them, scatters them, cuts and slays whole platoons. Lannes rushes forward and drives headlong into the centre of the Austrians; he routs them, chases them with Victor out of the village of Marengo, and hurls them into the Bormida. Dire is now the confusion in the Austrian ranks; horse, foot, artillery, all crowd in consternation to the bridges of the Bormida; the French, mad with exultation, yell fiercely, pursue, and kill until their arms are wearied. Conquerors now, they avenge the shame of their earlier discomfiture; 8000 of their enemies are stretched on the field, and nearly the whole of the hostile artillery is taken. On their own side, too, the slaughter has been immense: the blood of 6000 Frenchmen steeps the ground. The day of Marengo will be long remembered as one of the most sanguinary on record.

Rarely has a single battle been of such portentous import in the history of nations as this of the 14th June 1800. It led to the immediate conquest of all Italy by Bonaparte. Melas had no resource but to capitulate; not a single alternative remained to him. In order to save the remnant of his troops, he consented to retire behind the Mincio, and surrender all those fortresses it had cost him so much to reduce, and to garrison which he had so injuriously weakened his active force. The First Consul might have insisted on the Austrian troops being made prisoners of war; but he was unwilling to provoke them to desperation, and, besides, was anxious to return to Paris, where his presence was essentially needed to suppress an agitation against the new government. Consequently he signed the Convention of Alessandria, whereby he permitted the Austrians to retire with the honours of war, and in requital became master of Lombardy, Piedmont, and Liguria. An armistice was declared for Italy until receipt of intelligence from Vienna, and Bonaparte again wrote directly to the emperor proposing a definitive peace. In this letter, which he dictated on the night of the battle, he said, 'It is upon the field of battle, amid the anguish of multitudes of wounded, and encompassed by fifteen thousand corpses, that I conjure your majesty to hearken to the voice of humanity, and no longer permit two brave nations to continue an internecine strife for interests which are alien to them. It is for me to urge your majesty, since I am nearer than you to the scene of warfare. Your heart cannot be so keenly touched as mine.' Such language was not with him the cant of vulgarity: reckless of human life as

he was when he had an object to gain, his heart was humane, and a generous susceptibility easily kindled within it. After concluding the armistice, he returned to Milan, where he was received by the population in a frenzy of joy. He proclaimed again the Cisalpine Republic, and instituted a provisional government to administer its affairs, imposing upon it, as the price of his protection, political moderation and retributive forbearance. Acknowledging the important services rendered to him by Massena, he conferred upon him the command of the united armies, which, after his junction, mustered 80,000 combatants. He then set out on his return to Paris. In every place on the route he was hailed with acclamations, and particularly at Lyons, where he halted a day to lay the foundation-stone of the beautiful Place Bellecour—demolished during the fanaticism of 1793. As usual with him, he entered Paris during the night, arriving there on the 3d July, after an absence of nearly two months. For some time sinister rumours touching him and his enterprise had prevailed: now he was reported to be killed, now defeated; and schemes of ambition had suggested themselves to the restless; amongst others, as is said, to Lafayette and Carnot. His return as a triumphant conqueror dispelled all these vain dreams, and diffused a joy only the more delirious from the previous gloom of apprehension. The whole of Paris was illuminated, to welcome his arrival; the gardens of the Tuileries were thronged with people, who rent the air with repetitions of his name and clamours to behold him; the great bodies of the State waited on him to offer their congratulations; the Senate, the Legislative Body, the Tribunate, the high courts of justice, all appeared before him, and testified in adulatory language the depth of their homage. Truly the vision of a Republic was rapidly fading; the pear was almost ripe for the assumption of the purple.

Conscious now of the mortal blunder he had committed in rejecting the overtures for peace, the emperor despatched an envoy to Paris in the person of the Count de St Julien, but rather to sound the views of the French government than armed with actual powers to treat. Nevertheless the alarm of Pitt at this step was very great, and he laboured with all his might to induce the Austrian cabinet to continue the war, making it the most lavish promises of subsidies from the British people. In truth Austria was still inclined to try again the fortune of war from the very excess of her disaster, but she wanted breathing-time after her prodigious losses, and she besought an extension of the Italian armistice to Germany. Not only this did the First Consul think fit to grant her, but through the artful Talleyrand, drew the unsuspecting St Julien, a frank and simple soldier, to sign preliminaries of peace for which he had no authority. These, which were based on the treaty of Campo-Formio, the emperor found

himself, by his engagements with England, obliged to repudiate, but he offered to open immediate negotiations for a peace if England were allowed to take part in them. It was always the policy of Bonaparte to treat with his enemies singly, and he had a great repugnance to admit the participation of England in his negotiations with Austria, but he consented to waive his objection if a naval armistice were agreed to. This would have been of immense advantage to him, as he might thereby send succours to Egypt and Malta, which were closely blockaded by the British fleets; and on that account the proposal was rejected by the British cabinet. Thereupon he announced the resumption of hostilities, and acceded to the intreaties of Austria for a prolongation of the truce, only upon condition of her surrendering into his hands the great fortresses of Philipsburg, Ulm, and Ingolstadt; which she was fain to do, in order to purchase a further respite of forty-five days. Before the end of that period M. de Cobentzel arrived at Paris, accredited on the part of the emperor to negotiate with the French government, and obtained a further term of twenty days. Joseph Bonaparte was appointed as plenipotentiary to represent France, and the place chosen for holding the conferences was Luneville. Thither the two diplomatists proceeded accordingly, and mutually communicated their respective powers; after which ceremony M. de Cobentzel informed the French representative that he must decline to treat without the presence of a British envoy. This intimation being conveyed to the First Consul, excited in him great indignation, and he resolved at once to resume hostilities. Of his intention in this respect he caused Cobentzel to be apprised, declaring at the same time that the congress might continue to sit during the progress of the war, and negotiations be opened whenever he consented to treat without the intervention of England. Thus Joseph Bonaparte and Cobentzel remained at Luneville, calmly awaiting in presence of each other the course of events on the great fields of warfare in Germany and Italy, on which were to depend the stipulations of the contemplated treaty.

On both sides the belligerent armies had been reinforced during the continuance of the truce, and with the exception of Moreau, all the commanders likewise had been changed. Melas and Kray had been summarily disgraced by the Aulic Council, the Count Bellegarde being nominated to supersede the first, the Archduke John the latter. Massena, so indomitable in strife, proved incompetent to administer the affairs of a country, and was continually embroiled with the authorities of the Cisalpine Republic, who reproached him with extortion and other malpractices; consequently the First Consul had removed him, and substituted in his place Brune, the conqueror of the Russo-British army in Holland. Besides the two armies of Germany and Italy,

the First Consul marshalled two others—the one under Augereau on the Rhine, to protect Moreau's rear; the other under Macdonald in the Grisons, intended to scale the fearful eminence of the Splügen, and by a descent into the Tyrol, facilitate Brune's passage over the Mincio and Adige. From the successive prorogations, the armistice did not expire until the 28th November, on which day, by mutual concert, operations commenced. The young Archduke, eager to win laurels on the stage of glory, assumed the offensive; and after some minor actions, attacked Moreau with all his forces in the forest of Hohenlipden on the 3d December. The French army was strongly posted in a glade of the impenetrable wood, and could be assailed only by narrow and difficult passes. The Archduke, pressing forward with heedless ardour on the main route, was taken in the rear by Richepanse, and after a short conflict, defeated with prodigious loss. In consequence of this victory, no obstacle interposed to prevent Moreau from marching on Vienna. In vain the Archduke Charles was in the emergency placed at the head of the Austrian army; the disaster was too irremediable for even his genius to retrieve. Moreau passed in succession the Inn, the Salza, the Traun, and halted only at Steyer on the Ens, almost within view of the capital of the Austrian monarchy. Meanwhile Macdonald had executed the stupendous enterprise intrusted to him: in the depth of winter, amid terrific storms, through wreaths of thickly-drifted snow, he cleaved his way up the precipitous acclivity, and poured through the Valteline into the Italian Tyrol, even to its capital, the renowned city of Trent. Thereupon Brune passed the Mincio on the 25th December, at the expense of many lives, and the Adige on the 1st January, pushing with asperity Bellegarde, who staggered back on Bassano. Here intelligence of an armistice concluded by Moreau and the Archduke Charles reached the respective generals, which, after a brief correspondence, they agreed to extend to Italy; so closing on the 16th January 1801 the second great continental war arising out of the French Revolution.

In consternation at the reverses of his arms, at sight of the tricoloured flag waving within gunshot of Shoenbrunn, the emperor tore his treaty with England to pieces, and sent imperative orders to Cobentzel to conclude a peace on any terms. These the First Consul was now disposed to render harsh and grievous; and though Cobentzel struggled manfully to obtain a mitigation of the severity, he adhered inflexibly to his imperious purpose. Previous to the last events, in his sincere desire for peace he would have treated on something like equal terms; now he would dictate them as a conqueror. He insisted on every Austrian prince being rooted out of Italy, and assigned Tuscany to the Prince of Parma, who had married a daughter of the king of

Spain, with the title of King of Etruria. Piedmont he reserved for France, as Austria had intended to appropriate it to herself. The Adige he prescribed to be the boundary of the Cisalpine Republic, and the Rhine to be that of France, with the incorporation of Belgium. In fine he exacted a recognition of the Batavian, Helvetian, and Ligurian Republics, mere dependents on the French. The treaty containing these provisions was eventually signed at Luneville on the 9th of February 1801, being infinitely more advantageous to France than the previous one concluded at Campo-Formio. Thus the result of the second coalition, instead of tending to the prostration of France, and the extinguishment of her Revolution, raised her to a colossal height dangerous to the independence of Europe, and diffused over a wider circuit the principles of triumphant democracy.

It was not only from the great successes of the French armies in the field that the First Consul was incited to demand such rigorous conditions from Austria; he was further moved thereto by an extraordinary change in the aspect of affairs in the north of Europe. He had already formed a close intimacy with Prussia, who had firmly withstood all the instances and allurements of Pitt to break her neutrality; now Paul of Russia fell within the spell of his fascination. This unhappy personage, fickle and unstable in his indiscriminate impulses, had relapsed from his violent hatred of the French Revolution to an intense admiration of its present visible embodiment—namely, Napoleon Bonaparte, who hastened to derive from the alteration of his sentiments the most favourable consequences. As the Czar had previously forbidden his ministers to hold the slightest intercourse with any agents of France, it was necessary at first to approach him through the medium of Prussia; but the First Consul soon found means of opening a direct communication with him, and even of drawing him into an alliance. With this view he took two singularly adroit steps: first, to return some 6000 Russian prisoners who had been captured in the campaign of 1799 without exchange; and secondly, to make a tender to Paul of the island of Malta, which was on the point of falling into the power of the English through the strictness of their blockade. Neither of these gifts cost him any great sacrifice of generosity, since the detention of the prisoners was of no possible advantage to him; and he was sensible that let who might get Malta, it was hopelessly lost to France. But in the weak-headed emperor they wrought the liveliest satisfaction, particularly the cession of Malta, which he regarded with peculiar interest, as he had now assumed the office of Grand Master of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, and delighted to hold chapters of the knights to distribute its decorations. Moreover, he was animated with the deepest indignation against England and Austria; and under the influence of these combined considerations,

he threw himself with all the impetuosity of his character into the arms of the First Consul. His advances, indeed, were more warm than altogether suited the latter, who was averse to bind himself too absolutely in a Russian policy, and who sought merely to embroil the northern powers with England. In this purpose he succeeded beyond his most sanguine hopes, so singularly did circumstances favour him at the present moment.

In order to prevent her enemy from carrying on commerce or receiving naval stores, England claimed the right of searching the vessels of neutral nations at sea, and of seizing their cargoes if found to be French or Spanish property. This pretension had given rise in 1780 to what was called 'the Armed Neutrality,' originated by Catherine of Russia, and in which were included all the states of the Baltic. It was easy to suggest a revival of such a confederation to the eager mind of Paul, who at once seized upon the idea with avidity. In truth certain deplorable collisions had occurred between British ships of war and Danish and Swedish convoys, which had occasioned a very general irritation among all maritime powers. It was supremely agreeable to the vanity of Paul to play the part of a protector, which he especially arrogated with regard to several of the minor states of Europe, and he readily came forward to take the commerce of the world under the wing of his guardianship. As his temperament was too hasty to brook delay, or to be fettered by ordinary rules, he was urgent with Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark to join him in a hostile declaration against the claims of England, even using threats to induce their compliance, and in the meantime laid an embargo on all British vessels in the Russian ports, accompanied by circumstances of great barbarity towards their crews. This declaration was accordingly fulminated from St Petersburg on the 16th December 1800; and coupled with the aggressive act of Paul, was construed by the British government into a declaration of war. It retaliated, by laying an embargo on the shipping of the coalesced powers, which Prussia on her part revenged by immediately invading Hanover, whilst Denmark seized Hamburg, and confiscated all the British property found within its capacious harbour or warehouses. Thus, by an almost incredible fatality, England, who commenced the war in concert with all Europe, had contrived in the course of it to draw upon herself the hostility of nearly the whole continent, and in every particular to change situations with France: for not only was her complete isolation the same as that of France in 1793, but she was also ravaged by one of the most dismal famines that ever afflicted a country. Well might Bonaparte exult at so extraordinary a vicissitude of fortune, and indulge the loftiest hopes of crushing the most formidable rival of his grandeur.

Such was the desperate condition into which Pitt by his mis-

guided policy had plunged his country, and such was the moment in which he thought fit to retire from the helm of affairs. He had recently carried through the parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland his famous act of union between the countries, from which so much good was expected, and from which so much evil has flowed; and one of the means by which he had succeeded, was a promise to the Catholics of Ireland that they should be admitted to a full participation of civil rights with their fellow-citizens, from which they had been long most unwisely and unjustly excluded. This promise the inveterate bigotry of the king, George III., prevented him from fulfilling, and he availed himself of the opportunity to resign the ministry. But this can be considered in no other light than as a pretext, since the question of Catholic emancipation might, in such an emergency of affairs, have been well postponed: his real motive was a mingled one of shame and patriotism—shame for the palpable error of his policy; patriotism, that he might not stand in the way of a peace which he could not avoid confessing to be indispensable. The king was very loath to part with him, and the nation viewed his retirement with anxiety, for great confidence was placed in his undoubted administrative ability. The former, indeed, had one of those fits of madness which eventually became permanent with him, and a species of interregnum occurred for nearly a month, during which Pitt conducted the government, his successor not having received the seals of office prior to the royal incapacity. This successor was Mr Addington, subsequently Lord Sidmouth, a person of considerable pretensions, but of very mediocre talents, and who had throughout his career been a slavish adherent of his predecessor. This formed in some sort his only recommendation, since it seemed to insure the direction of that more able minister, and the apprehensions of the public were thereby proportionally relieved. And certainly he displayed a vigour at the commencement of his administration which evinced a superior guidance. It was manifestly of moment to strike a blow in the Baltic before the confederate powers had time to assemble their fleets, which being once united, might, in conjunction with those of Holland, France, and Spain, sweep the seas, and annihilate the supremacy of England. Accordingly, a powerful squadron, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, four frigates, and numerous bomb vessels, was despatched early in the spring of 1801 across the German Ocean under Admirals Parker and Nelson, who passed the strait of the Sound on the 30th March, and cast anchor the same day before the city of Copenhagen. Although somewhat taken by surprise, the Danes were well prepared for defence, and besides several strong land batteries, had moored numerous block ships heavily armed across the mouth of the harbour. Nothing daunted at the sight of these formidable obstacles, Nelson entered the narrow channel

lying between the harbour and the large shoal called the Middle Ground on the 2d April, after negotiations with the Prince Regent of Denmark for an accommodation had failed. Parker, the senior in command, remained outside, and Nelson took with him only twelve ships, of which three unfortunately grounded on the shallows, and became necessarily useless. With his nine remaining sail, however, he hesitated not to engage the enemy, and a cannonade ensued which for terrific violence has never been surpassed. The Danes exhibited a valour which answered to their ancient reputation, and defied with burning rage the warriors of an island in which they had once held sway. At the end of four hours a most horrible spectacle presented itself. The Danish line was destroyed; some of the ships had been blown into the air, and the water was covered with men struggling for life; others had taken fire, and the flames shot upwards, casting a frightful glare around. But the English had likewise suffered severely, insomuch that Parker, viewing the battle from a distance, was alarmed for Nelson's safety, and hoisted the signal for discontinuing the action. Upon Nelson being apprised of this, he expressed great indignation; and meeting Foley his captain on the quarter-deck as he paced uneasily up and down, he exclaimed to him, 'You know, Foley, I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind sometimes;' and then putting the glass to his blind eye, he added, 'I really see no signal; keep mine for close battle flying; nail it to the mast!' He thus disobeyed the orders of his chief, and continued the action. Sensible, however, of the crippled condition of his fleet, he sent a flag of truce to the Prince Regent, proposing a cessation of hostilities, which the latter readily agreed to, from the dread of exposing his capital to a destructive bombardment. Negotiations were afterwards opened; Nelson himself went on shore, braving the muttered curses of the exasperated Danes, and had an interview with the prince. A convention was settled whereby an armistice was declared for fourteen weeks, during which time Denmark undertook to make no hostile preparations, and before the expiration of which, Nelson trusted to have destroyed the fleets of Sweden and Russia in the ports of Carlscrona and Cronstadt.

A melancholy event arrested the British hero in his deadly purpose. Paul had been assassinated in his palace on the night of the 23d March by a band of conspirators, headed by Count Pahlen, the confidential minister of the unfortunate czar. His war with England was very unpopular among the Russian nobles, whose rents in a great measure depended on British commerce; and the increasing insanity he manifested leading him to acts of revolting cruelty, inspired all classes of the community with dread for their safety. In a despotic government, a tyrant can be controlled or got rid of merely by dethronement, which can be

accomplished only perhaps by his death; and examples of this violent process had been pretty frequent in the annals of Russia. So the deposition of Paul being planned, the plot was matured into one against his life; and in the dead of night he was strangled in his bedchamber. His eldest son Alexander reigned in his stead, a prince destined to exercise an important influence over the affairs of the world, but at the time of his accession singularly inexperienced and diffident of himself. With the murder of Paul, the northern confederacy was dissolved; England made certain concessions touching the right of search, which satisfied the maritime powers, and they resumed their previous relations of amity. Thus by a fortuitous crime was she saved from a state of danger greater than had ever menaced her national existence.

Whilst the autocrat of eastern Europe was stealthily despatched by nocturnal assassins, a machination of yet fouler dye had been attempted against the man who domineered in the west. From the tendencies exhibited by General Bonaparte after the 18th Brumaire, the Royalists had begun to entertain hopes that he contemplated the restoration of the monarchy, and that he would play the part of Monk towards Charles II. So sanguine, indeed, were these expectations, that the eldest brother of Louis XVI. had written to him two letters with distinct overtures on the subject, to which he had replied firmly, but courteously, in a manner to undeceive his illusions. In truth such an intention on his part was absolutely impossible: first, because he never could have served under any master; secondly, because he well knew that the princes and the noblesse had learnt no wisdom from their misfortunes, and that if reinstated in power, they would aspire to undo all the Revolution had effected. When disappointed, therefore, in their groundless anticipations, the Royalists burned with wrath, and regarding Bonaparte as the only obstacle barring the return of the Bourbons, some among them nourished designs of taking his life, since they had little chance of subverting his power. A miserable plot for the same object had been already detected by the police on the part of some obscure Jacobins; but the Royalist conspiracy was better managed, and baffled the vigilance of even the lynx-eyed Fouché and his practised myrmidons. It was conducted by three miscreants named Limoelan, St Rejant, and Carbon, creatures of a famous partisan chief in the Morbihan, Georges Cadoudal, a man of gigantic strength and ferocious determination. Their scheme consisted in exploding a barrel filled with powder and projectiles on some spot as the First Consul passed, and they selected for the purpose the Rue de Nicaise, a narrow street running from the square of the Carrouzel. This barrel they placed in a cart designed to obstruct the progress of his carriage, and they fixed on the 24th December for the execution of their project, as it was known the First Consul

intended to visit the opera on that evening. Accordingly, as he drove through the street, St Rejant fired the barrel; but by the dexterity of his coachman the carriage had passed the cart without stopping, and none of the projectiles hit it, although all the windows were smashed. The force of the concussion was terrible, and occasioned immense damage to the adjacent houses; moreover eight persons were killed, and twenty-eight wounded. After ascertaining the nature of the occurrence, Bonaparte continued his course to the theatre, and appeared in it with a calm and unruffled countenance. He shortly returned to the Tuileries, however, and finding there a large assemblage of persons to congratulate him on his escape, he broke out into a passionate invective against the Jacobins, whom he at once accused as the authors of the attempt. Fouché was of a different opinion, and rightly suspected it to be of royalist origin; but he was overborne by the general ebullition, and an immediate resolution was taken to execute on the Jacobins a summary act of vengeance. Although not a shadow of evidence could be procured to identify them with the plot of the Infernal Machine, as it was called, no less than 130 of their leaders were sentenced to be transported across the seas by an arbitrary edict emanating from the Council of State, and signed by the Consuls. Among these were several members of the old Convention, and Rossignol the general of the revolutionary army. The truth was, that Bonaparte hated ultra-democrats with all his heart, and eagerly seized upon the occasion to banish the more prominent of them from the realm of France. When it was represented to him that there was no proof of their guilt in the late outrage, he answered with warmth, 'It is no matter; they are exiled for the 2d September, the 31st of May, the events of Prairial, the conspiracy of Babœuf; in short, for all they have done, and all they may still do.' Thus he took upon himself to avenge the principal atrocities of the Revolution; and so completely had he mastered public opinion, that he was applauded for his justice, the victims of his anger being universally branded as murderers and scoundrels. In the sequel, the true contrivers of the Infernal Machine were discovered; and conclusive evidence being adduced against them, they were condemned and executed as they merited, the infamy of their crime involving in odium the entire royalist party.

The French had come so thoroughly to estimate the blessings of a settled government, that this attempt against the life of the First Consul, upon whom its permanence was felt wholly to depend, occasioned a general alarm, and addresses of felicitation were presented to him from all quarters expressive of the most earnest and affectionate solicitude for his safety. In no respect were these blessings more apparent than in the prompt retrieval of the national finances. Under the Convention and the Directory

scarcely any endeavour had been made to adjust expenditure to income, and as wants arose, they were met by an emission of assignats nominally hypothecated on the national domains, until these issues reached such a height, that the paper became utterly worthless, and ceased to perform the functions of money. Then it was contracted and changed in name to Mandats; but these speedily fell into the same discredit; and as the State was wholly unable to redeem them, and all the mischief arising from them had been perpetrated, they were virtually repudiated, by being made non-receivable in the payment of taxes or national domains, their last lingering source of value. Thus the entire mass of debt created during the Revolution was quietly extinguished, but at the same time an enormous amount of real property had been distributed among the community, chiefly in small tenements, insomuch that at the institution of the Consulate not more than 400,000,000 francs' worth remained for disposal. Besides the debt arising from the paper money, was the public or national debt, consisting of perpetual annuities, which had been paid in paper so long as that was in vogue; but when specie payments were reverted to, the Directory found it impossible to pay them, and at one blow struck off two-thirds of their amount, creating the distinction of the *consolidated third* and the *floating (mobilisés) two-thirds*. Even this third, however, it did not pay, nor for most of the supplies furnished to the armies, meeting these liabilities by a variety of extraordinary issues under the titles of rescriptions, arrearage notes, requisitionary notes, equipment notes, &c. answering to different services. All these issues were at a ruinous discount, as well as the portions of the public debt: even an annuity of five francs in the *consolidated third*, which was a preference stock, being in 1799 not worth more than twelve francs. After the 18th Brumaire the price began to rise, and after Marengo it reached forty francs, after the peace of Luneville fifty. This rise was owing not only to increased confidence in the stability of the government, but also to the payment, in September 1800, of the half-year's annuities in actual hard coin—the first of the kind since the commencement of the Revolution, and considered at the time the most marvellous of the many wonderful feats of the First Consul. This important operation was effected through the agency of the Bank of France, which Bonaparte had instituted shortly after his assumption of the Consulate, and which was formed by capitalists upon the joint-stock principle, the government itself being a large shareholder. This bank issued notes, which, being based on a real capital, and at all times convertible into specie, at once acquired the currency of money, and the establishment speedily became of immense advantage to the commerce of the country and to the financial operations of the government. There being nothing

more distinctive in Bonaparte's mind than a love of order, as soon as ever the state of affairs enabled him to do so, he called in the whole of the floating heterogeneous liabilities of the Republic, and upon different terms, according to the nature of the securities, *funded* them—that is to say, according to a graduated process of capitalisation, converted them into annuities inscribed on the Great Book of the public debt. The result of his liquidation was, that the entire national debt of France became less than 100,000,000 francs (£4,000,000 sterling) a year, bearing only the proportion of one-fifth in the general budget of expenditure; whereas that of England was five times the amount, and in the proportion of one-half; a vast difference, which went on continually increasing, since, contrary to the practice of British financiers, Bonaparte never contracted a loan during the whole course of his reign. His budget for the year 1801 was fixed at 500,000,000 francs (£20,000,000 sterling), three-fourths of the receipts being levied by direct taxation; but it is to be remembered that he maintained a great part of his army at the expense of dependent countries. By the admirable arrangements he perfected for assessing and collecting the taxes, he secured the punctual perception of the revenue; and by his scrupulous adherence to the system of avoiding the contraction of debt, he maintained a financial condition the most easy and prosperous of any state in Europe. Thus did he repair, by his firmness and foresight, the principal evil that had befallen the Revolution in its latter days.

Amidst all the engrossing cares that pressed upon his attention, the First Consul had never lost sight of the darling conquest he had made in the north of Africa, under the impulse of enthusiasm partly, on motives of deep calculation more especially. Kleber, whom he left to succeed him in the command of the army of Egypt, was a warrior of most undaunted front, but in character petulant, fickle, and infirm. Viewing, with almost the entire army, the departure of Bonaparte as a selfish abandonment of an enterprise he was conscious had failed, Kleber, urged by mingled feelings of anger and discouragement, opened a communication with Sir Sidney Smith, commander of the British squadron in the Levant, to bespeak his mediation for the conclusion of a peace with the Ottoman Porte on condition of the unmolested evacuation of Egypt. The grand vizier was already in Palestine at the head of an immense army, a horde of undisciplined rabble, with the design of penetrating by the desert to Cairo, while several thousand janissaries were to descend on the coast at Damietta or Rosetta. Smith eagerly undertook the part asked of him; and through his persuasion the grand vizier, wrapped as he was in Oriental ignorance and pride, consented first to a suspension of arms, and ultimately to refrain from molesting the retirement of

the French, who were to be conveyed under a British passport to France. These stipulations were embodied in a convention signed at El Arisch on the 28th January 1800, and Kleber forthwith commenced his preparations for departure, surrendering to the Turks by agreement several forts on the right of the Nile. But through the infatuation of the British government this peaceable termination of the expedition to Egypt was prevented. On the strength of intercepted letters from Kleber and other French officers, representing the situation of affairs in exaggerated terms of despondency, it had resolved not to permit the evacuation of Egypt unless the French army capitulated as prisoners of war, and sent out instructions accordingly to Lord Keith, commanding in the Mediterranean. Keith immediately transmitted an intimation to this effect through Smith to Kleber, in a letter dated three weeks prior to the convention of El Arisch; on receiving which, the French general published it to the army, simply adding these words: 'Soldiers, we answer such insolence only by victories; prepare for battle!' The grand vizier had already advanced almost to the walls of Cairo, and as he refused to retire, Kleber, resuming from the sting of insult all the fire of his temperament, resolved to attack him. Sallying out from Cairo, therefore, on the morning of the 20th March, he marched in squares to encounter the Turkish host; and on the plain of the ancient Heliopolis utterly routed the disorderly multitude, chasing the grand vizier across the desert with prodigious slaughter. By this decisive victory, and after suppressing a dangerous revolt at Cairo, Kleber again became complete master of Egypt; and recovering from the depression which had first weighed on him, prepared to consolidate the conquest. It is probable that, if he had lived, Egypt would have remained a definitive possession of the French empire; but walking in the cool of evening in the garden of his palace at Cairo, he was assassinated by a Mohammedan fanatic named Suleiman on the 14th June, and the command lapsed to Menou, the senior general in the army, who proved very incompetent to exercise such a high trust.

After having thus lost so favourable an opportunity for quietly recovering Egypt from the French, the British government made preparations for wresting it from them by force. A large armament had been assembled under Sir Ralph Abercromby at Port Mahon, originally intended to co-operate with the Austrians in the south of France; but after the failure of that project, its destination was fixed for Egypt. On the other hand, Bonaparte multiplied his efforts to reinforce the army in that country, and fitted out several expeditions for that purpose. Having compelled the court of Naples to make an abject submission to him, he posted 15,000 men in the Gulf of Tarento, designing to ship them thence for Egypt, and imposing the burden of their maintenance on the

apolitan government. From sundry points he despatched fast-sailing frigates with troops and stores, all of which arrived safely at Alexandria save one, the *Africaine*, captured by a British frigate. A larger expedition sailed from Brest under Antenne, who successfully eluded the British fleet, and sailed to the Mediterranean; but meeting with certain casualties, and fearing to be intercepted by a superior force, instead of proceeding straight to Egypt, he shaped his course northwards, and entered the port of Toulon, to the boundless indignation of the First Consul, who forced him out again almost by dint of blows. He, however, again took fright, and returned to Toulon, whence he did not afterwards emerge until the succours he bore were of no further use. Important events had occurred in rapid succession on the shores of Egypt. Abercromby had landed a first division of 5000 men in the Bay of Aboukir on the 8th March 1801, and gallantly repulsed the French who opposed the disembarkation. The entire army, amounting to 18,000 men, was then landed, and he advanced towards Alexandria. Menou had the bulk of his forces at Cairo, having by an incredible oversight not more than 6000 on the coast near Alexandria. In fact, either through sheer incapacity, or from an overweening confidence, he failed to concentrate his troops in sufficient force, and accordingly suffered two terrible defeats: one on the 13th March between Aboukir and Alexandria, and another under the walls of Alexandria itself on the 21st, in which he himself was present, having arrived from Cairo with a reinforcement of 5000 men. By these victories, the first of which had cost the life of their brave commander Sir Ralph Abercromby, the British were enabled to intercept the communication between Cairo and Alexandria, and so divide the French army. Menou shut himself up in the latter city, determined to hold out to the last extremity; Belliard, who commanded in Cairo, being threatened on all sides—by a body of 6000 sepoys from India landed at Suez, by the Turkish army from Syria, and by a combined British and Albanian force up the Nile—saw no resource but in a capitulation, which he signed on the 27th June, on conditions similar to those formerly rejected by the British government. The French were to embark with all the honours of war, and be conveyed to France. Menou subsequently accepted the same terms; and thus Egypt, the long-coveted acquisition which was to restore her supremacy on the continent and ocean of India, was finally lost to France.

Meanwhile the two governments, whose soldiers were contending for mastery at the foot of the Pyramids and around the ramparts of Cleopatra's imperial city, were intently engaged in negotiations between them for a pacification of their rancorous strife. Early in April, Lord Hawkesbury, the foreign secretary in the new Addington ministry, had made an overture to M. Otto,

who resided in London, to manage affairs relative to the exchange of prisoners, intimating the readiness of his government to open negotiations. The First Consul responded to this advance with alacrity, for at the moment, he placed his chief glory in giving France a universal peace. Conferences were accordingly opened at London between Lord Hawkesbury and M. Otto, which were conducted as secretly as possible, in order to avoid exciting hopes which might not be realised. But both parties being really desirous of effecting an accommodation, from the first the promise of a happy consummation seemed assured. The point of the negotiation turned chiefly on the possession of Egypt by the French, and of Malta by the English, since the latter consented to restore most of the colonies they had taken from France Spain, and Holland. Under these circumstances, after some diplomatic sparring, the negotiation was by mutual consent permitted to flag until the result of the contest in Egypt should be known each government indulging hopes of a favourable termination. As this result was from time to time communicated, the conferences were resumed, until the final discomfiture of the French being rendered a matter of certainty, the negotiation again proceeded briskly. To counteract the effect of the Egyptian intelligence, the First Consul caused Spain to execute an invasion of Portugal, the ancient and faithful ally of England; and he likewise made extensive preparations on the coast of France, with the avowed intention of attempting a descent on England or Ireland. These preparations were viewed with such alarm, that Nelson was recalled from the Baltic, to attack the flotilla of gunboats assembled at Boulogne, in which enterprise that gallant sailor was for the first time foiled. His ill success only more disposed the British ministers to conclude; and the First Consul taking umbrage at the conduct of Spain, who, without his participation, had concluded a treaty with Portugal, agreed to surrender the island of Trinidad, a Spanish settlement, which had been latterly the principal subject of dispute. Accordingly, all questions being adjusted, preliminaries of peace were signed by Hawkesbury and Otto on the 1st October 1801, to be afterwards converted into a definitive treaty by plenipotentiaries appointed to meet at Amiens; which was not finally concluded, however until the 25th March 1802. Egypt was restored to Turkey, and Malta to the Order of St John of Jerusalem, under the guarantee of one of the great powers of Europe. England retained Ceylon but gave back the Cape of Good Hope and Guiana to the Dutch. She acquired Trinidad, but relinquished Minorca to Spain. She also surrendered to France the petty factories of Chandernagor and Pondicherry in the East Indies. These were the main provisions of the treaty.

Thus, after a war of nearly nine years' duration, was peace

concluded between France and England. It is singular that at its termination each power was greatly aggrandised. France had enlarged her dominions by immense additions, and predominated without a rival on the western continent of Europe; England had achieved the complete supremacy of the seas, doubled her colonial empire, and secured vast acquisitions on the continent of India. Both of them had signally failed in the objects for which they had originally commenced the war; especially England, who, so far from crushing France, was compelled to limit her colossal ascendancy. Yet they experienced a heartfelt joy at its happy termination: the rejoicings in both countries were of the most rapturous description: general illuminations and festivals testified to the universality of the satisfaction; and all auguries seemed auspicious that a long interval would elapse ere the peace of the world was again disturbed. Alas, the grateful anticipation was only too soon falsified!



CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONCORDAT—WAR WITH ENGLAND—CAMP OF BOULOGNE—GEORGES' CONSPIRACY—THE EMPIRE—THE CONSECRATION—OCTOBER 1801 TO DECEMBER 1804.

In the blindness of their rage at all institutions savouring of Judaism, the fiery Revolutionists of 1793 had not only levelled the old Gallican Church, but anathematised the Christian religion itself, proscribed its professors, denounced its observances, and obliterated all traces of it from the land of France. First, a hideous schism had upreared its gorgon head, spouting blood and ruin far and wide; secondly, a leprosy of Atheism infected the life-blood of the generation, perverted the ingenuous virtue of youth, affianced itself indissolubly to the paramount dogma of the popular sovereignty, and wrought the revolting miracle, in an age of enlightenment, and in one of the first nations on earth, of the total abnegation of religious faith—of a faith above all things tending to exalt the dignity of man, and cement the human family in the bands of a universal brotherhood: the great aims, as boasted, of regenerative democracy. It is true the corruptions of the church and the conduct of the clergy had provoked a spirit of inveterate animosity, which in the violence of revolutionary ardour extended to the very creed they represented; but no instance had previously occurred in history of a great people openly disclaiming the authority of Heaven, abjuring all forms of worship, and even making such disclaimer and abjuration the test of

purity, the standard of patriotism. To a man with the prepossessions and sagacity of Bonaparte such a state of things was most repulsive. From early recollections, and the conservative bias of his mind, he was favourably inclined towards religion—the ancient Catholic religion of his fathers and his country, its rites and its pastors; moreover he judged that a national faith, as a mere element of social order, was indispensable to a community. Hence from the first moment of his accession to power he had relaxed the laws against priests, and they had returned from exile or come forth from their retreats in great numbers, through which he had himself produced a confusion it behoved him to terminate. The priests who had taken the oath to the civil constitution of the clergy, as ordained by the first National Assembly, were generally viewed with disrespect; by those who yet adhered to the faith on account of their alleged apostasy and their violation of the canonical law; by the indifferent and sceptical as imbued with the hated sacerdotal character, and on account of the prevailing dissoluteness of their manners. The nonjuring clergy were regarded as the only orthodox ministers of religion (except by the local authorities, which for the most part sought to uphold the functions of the conforming clergy), and they did all in their power to propagate that belief, which naturally revived all the evils of a schism. The public exercise of religion being again permitted, the two orders of priests were in open antagonism, and in every commune hostile congregations were formed, following opposite banners. This alone was a source of disorder which would have induced the First Consul to seek to extinguish it, but he had motives of yet greater gravity urging him to interfere. The recusant priests were formidable instruments of disaffection against his government, and universally served as Royalist agents to keep alive the cause of the Bourbons; so that, in addition to his desire of re-erecting a national altar, and composing religious dissension, he was intent to convert a body of active and influential enemies into useful and powerful allies. Consequently after the victory of Marengo and the peace of Luneville had imparted to his consular throne that stability which enabled him to defy in a great measure the current of public opinion, he made overtures of accommodation to the court of Rome, which he had previously, with premeditated purpose, laboured to propitiate by a deferential deportment.

The reigning pontiff, Pius VII., was of a mild and placable disposition, prepossessed in favour of Bonaparte, with whom he had held friendly intercourse during his first Italian campaign, and even of the Revolution, which he was far from regarding with the abhorrence common to ecclesiastics. Accordingly, he met the proposals of the First Consul with responsive alacrity, and forthwith despatched an envoy to Paris to negotiate for th

reconstruction of the Catholic Church in France. This envoy was a prelate of the court known as Monsignor Spina, and the First Consul made choice of a most appropriate person to treat with him—namely, the Abbé Bernier, who had played so eminent a part in the wars of La Vendée, and latterly in effecting the pacification of that country. But of all disputes, those appertaining to religion are the most difficult to adjust; and such were the discrepancies in the pretensions of the two governments, that an arrangement of them seemed almost hopeless. Bonaparte insisted that the old episcopates should be all abolished, and sixty new sees created in their stead; that the Pope should invite their holders to resign them, and in case of refusal, depose them; that the nomination of prelates should be vested in the head of the French government, to be confirmed by the Pope; that these prelates should be taken indifferently from the conforming and the nonjuring clergy; and that the Holy See should absolve and receive into the fold of the church the priests who had violated their vows of ordination, and taken unto themselves wives. Moreover, he insisted that the Pope should in express terms approve and ratify the confiscation and alienation of the property formerly vested in the church. From these demands the papal negotiator, at their first announcement, shrank appalled, more especially the two relative to the deposition of existing titulars and the absolution of married priests, who were considered in the light of detestable renegades. Upon these and other points the negotiation lingered on for several months, until the patience of the First Consul was exhausted; and sending one day for Spina to attend him at Malmaison, he rebuked him with great severity, and threatened vengeance on the court of Rome if his terms were not complied with. This exercise of direct intimidation produced a powerful effect: Cardinal Consalvi, principal secretary of state, hastened from Rome to appease the anger of Bonaparte; and after another interval of tedious negotiation, conditions of accommodation were finally agreed upon. The Gallican Church was anew constituted on the former principle of a spiritual union with Rome, but shorn of its territorial basis, and in all temporal matters, and in the administration of religious affairs, made dependent on the civil government of France. The First Consul, in fact, only allowed the Pope such sway as was consistent with his own dominion over the church as an institution of the State, and its absolute freedom from foreign interference or influence. On the 15th July 1801, the treaty consummating this great work of reconstruction and pacification was signed, and an established religion once more conferred on France, after a tempest of violence and impiety which had threatened the Roman Catholic Church with utter annihilation. This treaty received, and is known in history under, the title of THE CONCORDAT.

This restoration of religion cost the First Consul a greater effort than had yet attended any of his reactionary labours. It was violently opposed even in the Council of State, and he had to enforce it with all the vigour of his reasoning and determination. Among the generals of the army, likewise, it excited extreme dissatisfaction; and so unequivocal were the symptoms of opposition in the Tribune and the Legislative Body, that it was deemed prudent to defer its presentation for a legislative sanction. The same course, indeed, had to be followed with regard to other measures discussed and digested in the Council of State. The most important of these were projects of law for the institution of the Legion of Honour, a system of public instruction, and a code of civil law. The idea of the Legion of Honour belonged exclusively to the First Consul; and as it was deemed repugnant to the principle of equality consecrated by the Revolution, it was combated with yet greater vehemence than the Concordat. Bonaparte held that honorary distinctions were essential among a great community, as rewards and stimulants of merit; and he proposed to make the grades and decorations of this Legion common to all the services of the State—military, naval, and civil. It was to be composed of fifteen cohorts, each containing 7 grand-officers, 20 commanders, 30 officers, and 350 simple legionaries—in all, 6000 persons, who were to have annual incomes varying with their grades; being respectively 5000 francs (£200), 2000 (£80), 1000 (£40), and 250 (£10). Such an institution was recommended by many weighty reasons, and particularly for its assimilating tendency to the order of things in other countries, combined with its identification as a republican creation springing from the Revolution; yet being premature as regarded public feeling at the time, it was denounced as a counter-revolutionary measure of the most dangerous character. The system of public instruction devised by the First Consul comprehended the formation of numerous Lyceums throughout France for the education of youths up to a certain point of proficiency, when they were to be removed to colleges according to the professions they were intended to follow—there being six colleges for law, six for medicine, polytechnic schools, engineer schools, and finally military schools, all to be superintended by a university, which was itself dependent on a department of the government. With the view of inducing parents to intrust their children to these educational establishments, he instituted no less than 6400 bursaries, averaging about 750 francs (£30), a large portion of which was allotted to the sons of decayed military and civil officers; the remainder were open to competition. But the chief work matured by the First Consul, and one which remains a permanent monument of his glory, was the Civil Code, subsequently called the Code Napoleon. The old system of jurisprudence

having been swept away, and none as yet devised to replace it, he had appointed a commission of lawyers to digest this code, at the head of which were Portalis and Tronchet, the latter one of the unfortunate Louis's advocates; and when the work was accomplished, he submitted it to the judges of the superior courts, who were invited to comment upon its articles. It was afterwards brought under discussion in the Council of State, whose attention it occupied for several months, he himself presiding at all the sittings held for its consideration. He had prepared himself for this extraordinary deliberation, apparently so foreign to his pursuits and education, by a diligent perusal of sundry books on law, which gave him general ideas on that intricate study, in the same manner as he had studied books on controversial divinity when engaged with the provisions of the Concordat. With his comprehensive mind, which seized all the points of a question so rapidly, this sufficed to enable him to take part in the discussions on the various articles of the Code, in which he displayed an acuteness and profundity of judgment which more than on any other subject excited astonishment and admiration.

But all the successes and wisdom of the First Consul's government, uniting the distinctive merits of Cæsar as a conqueror, of Augustus as a pacificator, of Trajan as an administrator, of Justinian as a lawgiver, of Constantine as an architect of Christianity, had failed to extinguish that spirit of opposition which is invariably engendered in large deliberative bodies. The first lustre of his actions had worn away, the impulse he sought to give affairs was too rapid, his counter-revolutionary policy too marked, his ambition perhaps too palpable; and thus from causes difficult accurately to define, it came to pass that in the Tribune, the Legislative Body, and even in the Senate, a strong adverse feeling began to prevail towards him, which was first manifested in hostile elections to the Senate, which supplied its vacancies from candidates presented by the Council of State, the Legislative Body, and the Tribune. But it broke out in a more formidable manner in the session of the year X., which commenced on the 22d November 1801. The Civil Code, as least likely to provoke opposition, was first submitted to the Tribune, where it encountered, nevertheless, a very rancorous criticism, not so much on its merits, as on the form in which its titles were arranged; a ground of censure in itself insignificant, and partaking assuredly of the factious. Yet it prevailed: the Tribune resolved by a majority to oppose the articles primarily presented to it, and the Legislative Body likewise rejected them. Thus the government, not having the power of dissolution, was brought to a stand-still. Bonaparte gave vent to his anger in sundry violent diatribes uttered in the Council of State; and upon occasion of an audience he gave the Senate, burst into such a passion, that he struck with

confusion the members of the deputation, and particularly M. Sieyès, who retired abruptly in consternation. He resolved to crush the opposition by an act of violence, but was dissuaded from such a course by his colleague Cambacères, a man of infinite prudence and tact, who undertook to effect the object without an open violation of the constitution. During the year X., one-third of the members of the Tribunate and Legislative Body was to be renewed; and as the operation devolved on the Senate, it might be possible, through the medium of persuasion with that conservative body, to procure the expulsion of the most refractory among them, and to fill their places with men of more plastic mould, so as to insure a decisive majority in favour of the government. This task Cambacères proposed to take upon himself; and in the meanwhile it was agreed to withhold all the projects of law, and leave the rebellious councils without any business to transact: in which predicament of inanition they languished for the rest of the session, exposed to the ridicule of the facetious Parisians, who keenly enjoyed the embarrassment of their compulsory idleness.

Strong in the affections of the French people, and confident in his own ascendancy, the First Consul could venture thus to trifle with the national legislature; and whilst Cambacères was engaged in weeding it of obnoxious malcontents, he repaired to the city of Lyons, there to meet a numerous deputation from the Cisalpine Republic, for the purpose of conferring on it a definitive constitution. This constitution had been previously arranged, and although formed on the model of that of France, it was with considerable modifications. Instead of consuls, there were to be a president and vice-president, with a senate, a council of state, and a legislative body; no tribunate imparting to it even the semblance of a popular participation. To promulgate it, however, with more solemnity, a *Consulta* or Council of 450 members was convoked at Lyons, by which it was to be adopted in the presence of the First Consul. This *Consulta* assembled, accordingly, in the early part of January 1802, and voted without difficulty the project submitted to it. Bonaparte appeared among these Italians with almost regal pomp, and addressing them in their native language, was hailed by them with enthusiastic acclamations. As had been preconcerted with their leaders, he was himself proclaimed president of the republic, which took the name of the ITALIAN REPUBLIC—Count Melzi being nominated vice-president. On the 26th January he held a review of the Army of Egypt, which had been recently disembarked in France, and afterwards proceeded to an extraordinary sitting of the *Consulta*, in which, amidst thunders of rapturous applause, he was inaugurated in his high office. The ceremony was magnificent, from its imposing grandeur and from

the joyful excitement of the impassioned assembly, which viewed it as the baptismal rite of a resuscitated Italian nationality. At this fortunate moment Bonaparte united in his own person the first magistracies of two great empires, linked by the closest ties of alliance, with the full consent of their respective populations, won as well by his victories on fields of battle, as by the eminent capacity he had exhibited for the conduct of civil affairs, and for the revival of peace and order among societies. It is at this period undoubtedly that he shines brightest on the page of history, when the fumes of incense had not yet turned his brain, when his elevation had proved advantageous to the repose of the world, and when his mind was intent on measures to promote the happiness and prosperity of the countries he had rescued either from anarchy or from bondage, and which he was now called to govern.

The outward aspect of Paris corresponded with the great change that had come over the fortunes and the spirit of the Republic. To the affected squalor of the Jacobin era, to the frivolities and licentiousness of the Directory, had succeeded a courtly splendour mingled with a refined chasteness and elegance of manners, but largely imbued with a military cast. Equally fixed with his love of order in the First Consul's mind was a love of propriety, which he enforced on all around and connected with him. After his return from Marengo he had taken up his residence in the Tuileries, the palace of the kings of France, and latterly of her legislative councils, which he purified of all its republican insignia, and decorated in the gorgeous style befitting an exalted sovereignty. In this he held brilliant levees, and gave sumptuous entertainments after the fashion of a monarch, encouraging similar displays on a smaller scale among his colleagues and ministers. He instituted a Consular Guard, consisting of 6000 men, comprising picked companies of grenadiers and chasseurs, both horse and infantry, with a complement of artillery. To this guard, which was afterwards greatly enlarged, and became so celebrated as the Imperial Guard, he assigned a numerous staff of superior officers, thus holding near and attaching to his person a band of devoted defenders on whom he could always place implicit reliance. The internal arrangements of the palace he placed under the charge of his favourite aid-de-camp Duroc, whom he constituted governor thereof, and under four prefects of the palace, who managed presentations on days of ceremony. His wife Josephine also had her court, in which figured ladies of honour, the three sisters of the First Consul, and the usual attendants of a queenly circle. The transformation was indeed complete from republican rudeness and austerity, an irresistible impulse being given in all things great and small, equally in measures of essential interest

and in the trappings of parade, towards an abnegation of the leading principles of the Revolution, and a return to the discarded notions and forms of monarchy.

The peace in which all Europe now rejoiced, and curiosity to behold the scene of so many startling events, permitted and attracted strangers to visit Paris in great multitudes during the winter of 1801-2. The gaiety of that lively capital was never so sustained, so exuberant, so ostentatious, even in the days of the resplendent Empire. All the powers of Europe had representatives in Paris, who vied with each other in the splendour of their appearance, the richness of their equipages, the magnificence and multiplicity of their feasts. These presented at the diplomatic receptions of the First Consul their more distinguished countrymen, who gazed with an entranced wonder at the extraordinary man who had done so much to draw on him the attention of the world. To none of these strangers did Bonaparte extend so cordial a welcome as to Fox, the great leader of the Whig opposition in the British parliament, who had hastened to Paris among the most eager to contemplate the new France of the Revolution and its present chief. The meeting of such two men was remarkable, celebrated as were their names throughout the realms of civilisation, various their characters, contrasted their instincts, reciprocal, nevertheless, their admiration of each other. They had long and private interviews, in which they discussed political and social questions of the highest import, evincing often in their sentiments unanimity, more oftenly discordance. The characteristics of Fox were an enlarged benevolence, a noble enthusiasm, a fearless hatred of oppression; but although eloquent and powerful in debate, his mind was not of that masculine and decisive order which so strongly portrayed that of Bonaparte. He possessed a genius of a more abstract kind, a disposition, too, more kindly, and illusions still lingered within him which the latter had long since banished. Thus their ideas frequently clashed, as was natural between the philosophic leader of a liberal party and the practical ruler of a coercive government; yet their mutual esteem was not diminished: and if the British statesman had sometimes unpleasant suspicions touching the ambition of his host, he was always sensible to his great qualities; whilst from the First Consul correspondent manifestations were warm and genuine. They parted very excellent friends; and had not a perverse fate ordained that the champion of liberty should only, at the portals of the grave, gain the reins of power when his former interlocutor was drunk with excess of prosperity, peace might have been preserved in Europe for many years: France could have reposed in the majestic might she had attained; England would have consolidated her empire by wise and timely concessions, and incorporated within it,

not in name only, but in spirit and actuality, that gangrened member which, when discovered, jeopardises, if not terminates her vitality.

Amid the blaze of reviving opulence and prosperity, unheeded or even applauded by the nation late so jealous of authority, the First Consul executed his design of extinguishing opposition in the legislature. Through the medium of the complaisant Senate, and by a violent stretch of the constitution, twenty of the most obstreperous members were excluded from the Tribunate, and sixty from the Legislative Body, being a fifth of their respective numbers; and their places being supplied, an extraordinary session was held in April of the renovated councils. So effectual had been the work of purgation in their ranks under the pruning hand of Cambaceres, that now, without a murmur of disapprobation, they adopted and passed into laws all the measures submitted to them. Among these the most important were the Concordat and the Civil Code. There was nothing Bonaparte had so much at heart as the consummation of the religious peace, and he was intent to celebrate it with extraordinary pomp. He had yet several difficulties to encounter touching the nomination of the new prelates with the court of Rome, which had deputed Cardinal Caprara as papal legate at Paris; but after many altercations, he succeeded in carrying all his points, and Easter Sunday was finally appointed for the solemn festival of the restoration of religion in France. At this great event all the bodies of the State were to attend in the cathedral of Nôtre-Dame, before whose long-forsaken shrine the cardinal, assisted by the sixty archbishops and bishops of the new church, was to perform the ceremonies of divine worship. It is a singular proof of the rooted aversion towards religion then prevalent in France, that the generals of the army, through the most turbulent and democratic of their number—Augereau—openly mutinied against the order issued for their presence at the celebration; and it was only upon the stern and reiterated command of Bonaparte that they consented to obey. On the day assigned, the 18th April 1802, the streets from the Tuileries to Nôtre-Dame were lined with troops and thronged by applauding multitudes. The First Consul appeared surrounded by a brilliant staff of officers, and was accompanied by a long train of carriages, bearing the principal functionaries of the government and the ladies of the court. He was received at the door of the cathedral by the Archbishop of Paris at the head of his clergy, and conducted to the seat set apart for him. The Senate, the Council of State, the Legislative Body, and the Tribunate, were ranged around and in front of the altar. Mingled with the dazzling uniforms of the military were the waving plumes and bespangled dresses of the females who clustered around Madame Bonaparte. The pious services were

rendered amidst a hushed silence; and whilst many, especially amongst the females, were affected to tears at this renovation of a cherished faith, some of the officers present took pains to manifest indifference and scorn. Bonaparte preserved throughout the ceremony a grave expression of countenance, and afterwards severely rebuked those who had violated decorum by an irreverent demeanour. The auspicious day was closed by a banquet at the Tuileries, at which consuls, cardinal, prelates, generals, senators, tribunes, officers of State, were intermingled in a glittering and variegated throng. Thus through the determined perseverance of Bonaparte, who had to combat prejudices and difficulties on all sides—in France itself among both laity and clergy, at Rome with bigoted ecclesiastics—was the Catholic Church re-established in France, which but for him would probably have remained for ever annihilated.

Not by mere piety certainly, nor by a conviction of the necessity of a religious faith to a community, was the First Consul solely actuated in rearing again the hierarchical altar crushed by the Revolution: another motive equally powerful impelled him—the wish to revive a traditionary adjunct of monarchy, and so pave the way for monarchy itself. And in truth the reactionary bent towards it was sufficiently strong, and needed but little stimulus: men had already begun to canvass in what form it should be shaped. Herein the ideas of those around him, particularly of his brothers, outstripped the desires of Bonaparte himself, who judged the season not yet ripe for the creation of a hereditary sovereignty. An intermediate state was to be devised, which might retain the outward semblance of a republic, with all the concentration and authority of an absolute monarchy. Under the existing constitution the consulate was held for only ten years; but upon the Senate had been conferred the prerogative of making organic laws under the title of *Senatus Consulta*, and by virtue of one of these the term was extended to twenty years. This, however, was far from satisfying Bonaparte, who, by the advice of Cambaceres, resolved to appeal directly to the nation, as if in deference to the sovereignty of the people; and an ordinance was issued by the Council of State putting the following queries to the French people:—1st, Shall Napoleon Bonaparte be Consul for life? and 2d, Shall he have the power of nominating his successor? So universal was the feeling in favour of his elevation to a permanent dictatorship, that these questions were answered in the affirmative by more than three millions and a half of votes recorded in the registries, against less than nine thousand in the negative. Thereupon the Senate promulgated a fresh *Senatus Consultum*, embodying these articles, and providing, moreover, that the First Consul might appoint his successor either in his lifetime by adoption, or by testament. Important alterations were at the

same time made in the constitution of the legislature : the Senate itself was increased to one hundred and twenty members, forty of whom were nominated directly by the First Consul, and the power of dissolving the other two chambers was vested in it ; the Tribunate was, on the contrary, reduced to fifty members, and divided into five sections corresponding to the sections of the Council of State, with which projects of law were to be privately discussed. All public deliberation was therefore abolished, since the arguments before the Legislative Body could never be controversial ; and under the mask of certain flimsy disguises, a pure despotism was established. No voice or pen could henceforth criticise the acts of the conqueror's government ; yet such is the fickle nature of the French, and so completely did a military passion enthral them, that they gloried in their slavery, and were never tired of singing the praises of him who kept them in his chains.

From this time forth the adulation with which Bonaparte was addressed by the subservient bodies who existed at his will, tended to inflate him with a boundless vanity and arrogance. All but in name the greatest potentate on earth, it was natural he should assume a regal pomp, and like the ancient kings of France, be drawn on state occasions in a sumptuous carriage yoked with eight milk-white steeds. But he carried his pretensions much higher, and aspired to become the absolute arbiter of affairs in Europe. Not content with exercising the high functions of mediator in the distribution of the ecclesiastical spoils among the secular powers of Germany, a measure adopted by the Diet of the empire precisely similar in character to the seizure of the church property in France, by which he gained a paramount influence over the whole Confederation, and especially bound to him Prussia, Bavaria, and the minor principalities, to the prejudice and detriment of Austria ; he interfered forcibly in the subversion of the Dutch government and also of the Swiss, which latter had undergone a counter-revolutionary change, although the independence of Holland and Switzerland was expressly guaranteed by the treaty of Luneville ; and he likewise incorporated with France, by a simple *Senatus Consultum*, the kingdom of Piedmont and the island of Elba. It was not so much that his interference with Holland and Switzerland was injurious to those countries, since it proved rather the reverse, as he imposed moderate and equitable governments on them, whilst the annexation of Piedmont was an event that had been tacitly sanctioned in the negotiations both at Luneville and at Amiens ; but the imperious manner of his proceedings, and his evident contempt of any restraint founded upon public law, justly offended Europe, and gave especial umbrage to England, whose susceptibilities were already painfully affected by the overshadowing aggrandisement of France. A strong war

party still existed in England, comprising the principal personal adherents of Pitt, which sought on all occasions to assail the French government, and to damage the Addington ministry by accusations of subserviency to it. Such assaults are easy to a factious and envenomed opposition; yet touching national pride, they often produce a powerful and mischievous effect. The First Consul added to the embarrassment by refusing to make the smallest concession even by way of explanation, but, on the other hand, demanded reparation for the villanous libels circulated against him by the press of London, particularly in French journals conducted by emigrants. This led to the prosecution of one Peltier, an infamous inventor of calumnies; but it resulted in an acquittal when tried before a jury, and thus only served to incense him the more. Hence an irritation sprung up between the two governments, which speedily manifested itself as well in the angry tone of their correspondence as in overt acts of defiance. England refused to evacuate Malta as stipulated in the treaty of Amiens, still distrusting Bonaparte's designs regarding Egypt; he on his part publicly outraged Lord Whitworth, British ambassador at Paris, at a diplomatic levee held in the Tuileries, and addressed a boastful message to the Senate, in which, alluding to differences with the cabinet of London, he used the following most insulting expression:—'Whatever may be the success of the intrigue at London, it will not draw other nations into fresh coalitions; and the government says it with just pride, England alone cannot at the present day cope with France.' Such language was necessarily all but insufferable, consistent with a regard to national honour, and provoked intense exasperation throughout the whole of the British islands. Nevertheless the governments were really desirous of avoiding a rupture; and with that view negotiations were carried on during the spring of 1803 between Talleyrand and Whitworth, in which various schemes of accommodation were mutually propounded, unfortunately without effect; and at length war was declared on the 16th May. The British government instantly issued letters of marque for the capture of French trading vessels; and the First Consul arrested all British travellers in France, who were very numerous at the time, and whom he consigned to durance at Verdun for the duration of the war. This step on his part was unusual, and certainly very useless; but there seems no good reason why peaceful people, prosecuting their legitimate avocations, should be more rightfully seized and despoiled on the sea than on land, if such acts of violence are allowable at all.

So abruptly came to an end the famous peace of Amiens! As on all such occasions, it has been warmly debated on which side the blame of the rupture lay; and as in almost all cases of war, it may be said to have been about equally divided. It was more the policy

and object of Bonaparte to prolong the truce, for such only could it be considered, since he had no means of assailing England except by hazarding an invasion; and he was intent, above all things, to mature a powerful and efficient navy. A colonial empire too he sought to rear again by the subjugation of St Domingo, whither he had directed an immense expedition to wrest it from the revolted negroes; and by the acquisition of Louisiana, which he had extorted from the imbecile court of Spain, in return for setting up an Infanta in the effigy of a queen at Florence. For these purposes he required time—six or seven years at least, by which period he would be in a condition, as he contemplated,* to erase from the list of nations the only rival of his grandeur. From counter considerations, it behoved England perhaps to precipitate hostilities, since the overbearing tone and conduct of Bonaparte made it manifest that they must be eventually unavoidable; and she provided for her own safety best by renewing them before he could contend with her on her own element. Still, it was not from any such forethought that the Addington ministry was urged to break the peace; it yielded to an impulse that was much too feeble to resist. With the cessation of the war, strange to say, the commerce of Great Britain had collapsed; hence the mercantile and manufacturing classes actually clamoured for its renewal. Moreover, apart from any motives of interest, the nation had resumed the jealousy and hatred of France contracted in a long warfare, which Bonaparte, instead of seeking with astute policy to allay, did his utmost to aggravate by his deplorable want of temper and discretion. In truth he underrated the capacity of England to withstand him, and fell into the same error as the Jacobins before him. Accordingly, in his brief intercourse with her, he never ceased to hold a dictatorial and intimidating language, which was most natural to him when he thought he had the upper hand, and which he deemed expedient too towards a ministry he despised for its weakness. Thus, in striking the balance between right and wrong as regards the rupture of the treaty of Amiens, it must be left to oscillate in a hideous equipoise.

After their short embrace of amity, the two nations flew at each other with a rancour more than ever inveterate. The war was popular on both sides, and an eager patriotism animated the respective populations. The First Consul commenced his preparations for prosecuting it with characteristic promptitude and energy. To invade England with an army of 100,000 men, and exterminate her at a blow, was his settled purpose, which he pursued with untiring indefatigability for two years. Vast and perilous as was such an enterprise, he gathered means adequate for its successful

* He has himself avowed all his designs in conversations at St Helena, recorded in the memoirs of Las Cases, vol. viii. pp. 14, 15.

accomplishment. Compelling Holland to take part in the contest, he availed himself of all her ports and resources to equip ships of war, and construct gun-boats calculated to convey troops, cannon, and ammunition. Similar operations were conducted on a gigantic scale in the harbours and rivers of France itself, with the view of creating a flotilla of several hundred flat-bottomed vessels to be collected in the Channel. After mature consideration, Boulogne was fixed upon as the place of rendezvous for this flotilla, and immense docks were excavated for its reception. There, accordingly, in the course of 1803, notwithstanding the constant vigilance and exertions of the British cruisers, were assembled 2000 vessels of various size, and variously armed, but all of the most solid construction, and capable of transporting to the shore of England from 100,000 to 120,000 men, with 400 pieces of heavy cannon and 10,000 horses. Five camps were formed, containing from 25,000 to 30,000 men each, at different points along the Dutch and French coasts, from the Texel to Brest, ready to be concentrated upon the briefest notice. Thus the attention of the English government was distracted, from its uncertainty as to the real object of attack since it might be from the Texel up the Thames, from Boulogne on the coast of Sussex, or from Brest on Ireland, which was, as usual, quite ripe for revolt. Bonaparte's real intention was to make his main effort with the flotilla of Boulogne, believing it quite possible to cross the Strait under cover of a fog, or in the darkness of a long night, or even, with a loss of some 10,000 men in defiance of a hostile fleet. At the same time he designed that the Texel and Brest fleets should each take on board 20,000 men and if able to get out of harbour, co-operate by demonstrations at the mouth of the Thames and in the Irish Channel. To render more certain of success this prodigious scheme of invasion, unparalleled in any age of the world, he extended his combinations in order to gain a temporary superiority in the British Channel, were it only for forty-eight hours, by despatching fleets from Toulon and Rochefort, as if on expeditions to the West Indies, but in reality destined, after alluring British squadrons in pursuit, to force the blockade of Brest, and effecting a junction with the armament in that harbour, to sweep the Channel with a preponderating force, and so cover the passage of the flotilla. Even should the French fleet be destroyed in this decisive operation he cared not, since he would land his army and achieve his purpose of universal dominion at London. Thirty or forty ships and 20,000 lives were a small sacrifice to attain such an end. He proposed to head the expedition in person, and risk his life and fortune in its terrible hazards. He passed several months in the camp of Boulogne incessantly occupied in forwarding the preparations, exercising the troops, inuring them to embark and disembark, accustoming them to act as sailors and to withstand the motion of the sea, and inspir-

ing them by his own example with all the ardour and courage necessary to insure a triumphant termination of their labours. Not content, however, with thus directly menacing the existence of England, he likewise sent an army of 30,000 men into Hanover, which country had nothing to do with the quarrel beyond having George III. for its sovereign, and another of 15,000 to occupy the Gulf of Tarento, whence he might direct another blow on Egypt or Malta. Besides the advantage of quartering these forces on the Hanoverian and Neapolitan governments, he, moreover, excluded all British commerce from the great rivers of northern Germany, the Elbe and the Weser, and from the whole of the Italian peninsula. Spain he allowed to preserve neutrality for a time, on payment of a large monthly subsidy; but she was speedily compelled to take part in the war, and place at his disposition all her ships, arsenals, and ports. As he had now little hope of being able to retain Louisiana, he sold that magnificent settlement to the United States of America for eighty millions of francs (£3,200,000), thereby at once securing a seasonable supply of cash, and preventing his enemy from appropriating so important an acquisition.

The narrow stream of the Channel then alone interposed to save Great Britain from the devastating sword of this ruthless Goliath, who had sworn in his lustful heart to clutch and spoil her. Her vast colonial empire, scattered over the four quarters of the globe, could afford her no strength in the struggle, but rather served to detract from it. Unaided by any but her native resources, she had to defend her insular home, the nucleus and buttress of her might, against the greatest military power deployed on the earth since the days of imperial Rome in its zenith. By virtue of the conscription, Bonaparte had raised the French army to 480,000 men, 100,000 of whom he kept at the expense of dependent states. He had a fleet of fifty sail of the line, soon increased to seventy by the addition of the Spanish navy. To oppose this accumulation of forces, England possessed seventy-five sail of the line actually in commission, and more than 200 frigates. Her army consisted of 130,000 men, but these were mostly distributed in the colonies and in Ireland, so that but a small part was left for her own protection from invasion. But beholding the peril to which she was exposed, her government and people made incredible exertions to place her in a fitting posture of defence. Any domestic administration is more easy to be tolerated than a foreign conquest, and the examples France had given in subjugated countries were not such as to render an inroad of her troops a thing to be desired. Bad, tyrannical, and corrupt, therefore, as was the British government at this period, all classes of the community joined in a heartfelt determination to resist an invading foe. In parliament opposition had almost

disappeared, and the ministerial propositions were passed with scarcely a comment. The navy was augmented by twenty-five sail of the line, and 100,000 seamen were voted for its service procured for the most part by the revolting practice of pressing. A militia amounting to 80,000 men was called out, and the regular army increased by a vote of 50,000 men, to be levied after the manner of the French conscription. But this compulsory process proved unnecessary, from the formation of volunteer corps throughout the country, which—such was the patriotic ardour in the population—soon presented an aggregate of more than 300,000 men. Even in Ireland 70,000 volunteers enrolled themselves; and by the spring of 1804 there was an actual force on foot, in army, militia, navy, and volunteers, of nearly 800,000 men. From the most peaceful and merely commercial nation in the world, Great Britain passed into one of the most warlike, and was fired by a military mania almost unprecedented in any country. The war commenced by the aristocracy was now in earnest taken up by the nation: all ranks and professions were smitten by the new passion; grave and reverend judges descended from the bench, advocates threw off their wigs and gowns, doctors left their patients and laboratories, merchants, shopkeepers, farmers, artisans, forsook their avocations to be drilled by martinets on parade: the smiles of women were bestowed only on those who discarded the garb of peace for that of war. Unfortunately all these preparations not only interfered with the productive business of the country, but entailed a vast expenditure of public money, amounting in the year 1804 to the enormous sum of £82,000,000 sterling, of which nearly one-half was raised by loan. For a merely defensive warfare this was assuredly a monstrous charge, being nearly triple Bonaparte's budget for the same year. Under the pressure of such a burden enthusiasm began sensibly to decline; and the existing ministry as usual in all cases of disappointment and distress, had to bear the brunt of the reaction. Confessedly weak and incompetent, resting for support mainly on the favour of the old king, whom the fearful character of events had again driven into temporary madness, it was in May 1804 expelled from office by a coalition of parties against it, and Pitt was once more installed at the helm of affairs. By the nation generally it was wished that at so critical a moment a junction of the most able men in the commonwealth should be effected, and especially that Fox and his friends should be included in the administration; but this the king, on recovering from lunacy, in his perverse bigotry refused to sanction, preferring the chance of seeing the First Consul in St James's to the admission of a man into his councils who advocated liberal and enlightened principles of government.

Thus straining their utmost sinew in mutual repulsion, standing

on the edges of the deep moat which divided them mouthing fierce defiance, England and France engrossed the attention and speculation of the world, as they had so often done before in their interminable strife of centuries. But an extraordinary event soon occurred which mitigated in some measure the intensity of this interest, and in its consequences operated a complete change in the eventual course of the war. An extensive Royalist conspiracy to assassinate the First Consul was discovered at Paris. At its head were Georges Cadoudal, the famous Chouan chief, and Pichegru, who had escaped from his confinement at Sinnimari, and returned to England, where he had been in close communication with the Bourbon princes, then ostentatiously and offensively entertained at the British court. Two of the Polignacs were associated with them, and about fifty Chouan brigands had contrived to secrete themselves in Paris to execute the crime. The scheme devised was to attack the First Consul on the road to St Cloud or Malmaison, rout his guards, and slaughter him; it being held that such would be a fair fight, and not a base murder. From his old connection with Moreau in the Army of the Rhine, Pichegru sought an interview with that general, who was on very evil terms with Bonaparte and his government. Moreau met him more than once; but although favourable to an overthrow of the consular power, he was inflexibly opposed to the restoration of the Bourbons; consequently there is reason to suppose he was not made acquainted with the real plot, much less that he gave his adhesion to it. The police had been privy to the existence of a conspiracy almost from the first, without, however, being aware of its magnitude, or of such distinguished personages being engaged in it. In the course of February 1804 the whole secret was, however, revealed, and the officers succeeded in capturing the principal conspirators. Moreau likewise was apprehended, and arraigned with the others at the bar of the chief criminal court of the Seine. No trial perhaps ever excited a more extraordinary sensation, as well from the momentous nature of the charge, as from the singular contrasts of fortune exhibited among the actors, and the strangeness of their association. It was surely a most striking spectacle to behold the conquerors of Holland and Hohenlinden included with members of the old nobility and a gang of banditti in an indictment for compassing the death of the conqueror of Marengo! An additional zest was given to the excitement by Pichegru being found one morning strangled in his cell, whether a suicide or murdered, is still involved in doubt. The trial lasted fourteen days, and at its conclusion the guilt of Georges being clearly established, and indeed not denied, he and nineteen of his accomplices were sentenced to suffer death, amongst whom was one of the Polignacs. The rest of the accused were either

altogether absolved or condemned to undergo terms of imprisonment; Moreau was classed with the latter. Bonaparte displayed a politic clemency on the occasion; he pardoned the Royalist nobles convicted by the court, and suffered Moreau to retire to America after realising all his property. He would have even spared the life of Georges, whose indomitable character inspired him with admiration; but that determined malefactor refused his offers, and avowed an unconquerable enmity to him. So he and his associate ruffians were executed on the Place de Grève.

The disclosures elicited in the investigation of this conspiracy led straightway to two events, each momentous in its results, but very dissimilar in their nature: the elevation of Bonaparte to an imperial throne, and the execution of a prince of the House of Bourbon in a ditch. The latter had precedence in the order of occurrence. The Duke d'Enghien, grandson of the Prince de Condé, had been residing for some time at Ettenheim, in the duchy of Baden, attracted thither by an attachment he nourished, it is said, for a Princess de Rohan. He was in the pay of England, and had already borne arms against his country, as he was prepared to do again. In several of the depositions, it had been confessed that a prince was intended to join the conspirators, in order to seize the government upon the death of Bonaparte; and in some it was, moreover, stated that a strange young man often had interviews with Georges, to whom the latter paid unusual deference. This prince was expected to come from England by way of Normandy, in the same track followed by Georges and the others, on which a strict watch was instituted; but no prince made his appearance. It then occurred to Bonaparte, whose mind was vehemently agitated on the subject, that the Duke d'Enghien was probably implicated in the plot; and it being ascertained, upon inquiry, that he was often absent from Ettenheim for several days at a time, he inferred conclusively that he was the young man spoken of in the depositions. He instantly determined to apprehend him, utterly indifferent to the consequences of so flagrant a violation of public law, and of the inviolability due to the German Confederation. He refused to hearken to any remonstrances from Cambaceres or others, but issued peremptory orders for the abduction; which was accordingly effected on the 15th March, and the young prince lodged that same night in the citadel of Strasburg. Nothing was found among his papers tending to connect him in the slightest degree with Georges, and it is certain he had no knowledge of him or his scheme; yet did Bonaparte persist, nevertheless, in the resolution to take his life. By this second plot to assassinate him, he was stirred with bitter wrath against the Royalists, and especially against the Bourbons, whom he accused in each instance of being the instigators of enterprises in which they had not the

courage themselves to take part. He was intent to wreak on them a signal vengeance, and by an act of extraordinary severity, to teach them a lesson for the future. 'These people will never learn experience,' he said: 'I must show them what sort of a man they have to deal with, and of *what we are capable!*' and he drove from him with anger all who ventured to move him to relent. Consequently he had the prisoner conveyed to Vincennes, where, being arraigned before a military commission on the charge of inciting civil war and bearing arms against France, he was condemned to death, and immediately afterwards executed by being shot in the fosse of the fortress. The entire proceeding was in strict accordance with instructions issued to Savary, his aid-de-camp, by the First Consul himself, who took a savage pride in thus personally defying not only the effete race he had supplanted on the throne, but the whole of the sovereigns of Europe. The act itself was equally wicked and impolitic, and Talleyrand effectually characterised it when he said in his arch cynicism, 'It was more than a crime—it was a blunder.' In truth, when fairly roused, Bonaparte lost all command of himself, and gave no heed but to the impulses of passion. He sought, however, to counteract the effect of his unmannerly violence in Europe by exposing the disgraceful practices of certain British diplomatic agents, particularly Drake, minister at Munich, who laboured, by money and intrigues, to foment a Royalist outbreak in France. The whole of their correspondence was known to the French police, and Drake proved so simple a blockhead as to fall into a very palpable snare set to entrap him. He was decoyed into a direct correspondence with an agent of the police itself, whose letters were actually dictated by the First Consul in his own cabinet, and to which Drake replied in the full confidence of their genuineness. When he had been allowed completely to compromise himself and also his government, the letters were made public, and covered both with ineffable confusion and ridicule. With the revival of the war had also revived all the hopes of the emigrants, who easily imparted to the British ministry their own sanguine ideas. Bonaparte was represented to have lost all his popularity, as well as the attachment of the army, which was disgusted with his insane project of an invasion of England; and that, in short, the moment was at hand when his usurped power might be readily overturned, and the happy era of a Bourbon restoration consummated.

In such infatuated dreams did the British aristocracy and the French emigrants indulge, whilst the object of their evil prognostications was exalted to a matchless grandeur by the enthusiastic gratitude of the very people and army to whom he was described to have become odions. The arrest and death of the Duke d'Enghien undoubtedly cast a gloom over public

opinion even in France itself; but it was momentary, and soon gave way to a feeling of tribulation at the hazards to which the precious life of her regenerator and champion seemed so incessantly exposed. 'If he should at last fall beneath the knife of the assassin, what would become of France, of her restored prosperity, of her grandeur?' was asked on all sides, and the question originated the gloomiest forebodings. The tendency to monarchical ideas had been growing continually stronger, and it now assumed a decisive momentum. By universal confession, it was allowed, throughout this revolutionary land, that the only stable institutions were to be found in a hereditary monarchy; and that if one were created in the person and family of Bonaparte, it would lessen the temptation to take his life by all the consolidation of a dynasty. He himself was nothing loath to receive a crown. At the height to which he had attained, not only vanity prompted, but a sense of fitness too, the assumption of some title more significant of his supremacy than 'Citizen First Consul,' which began to fatigue and gall him in its constant repetitions. The nation therefore being eager to hail a sovereign, and repudiate the Republic, so late its cherished idol, and the man of its choice being equally eager to be one in name as in reality, the affair was of very simple adjustment. Fouché, old Jacobin as he was, took the most active part in promoting it, since Cambacres was somewhat averse to a project which would reduce him from a colleague into a subject of Bonaparte. By his means a commission of the Senate was appointed to meet at St Cloud, and concert with the Consuls the form and institutions of the new monarchy. The occasion was similar in many of its features to the transition of Rome from a Republic to an Empire under Augustus, and the precedent supplied some suggestions. As in Rome, so now in France the title of King was in bad odour, and the military one of Emperor held more appropriate. Accordingly, it was resolved that an imperial royalty should be created hereditary in the family of Bonaparte, and an organic *Senatus Consultum* was forthwith framed and promulgated to effectuate the change. Six high state functionaries were moreover nominated to surround the throne: a grand-electeur, an arch-chancellor of the Empire, an arch-chancellor of State, an arch-treasurer, a constable, and a high admiral. In the army the old grade of marshal was restored; and in the palace the elevated functions of a grand-almoner, a grand-chamberlain, a grand-huntsman, a grand-equerrie, a grand-master of the ceremonies, a grand-marshal of the palace, and other satellites of a monarch. Furthermore, great officers of the Empire were appointed to preside over the different electoral colleges; and thus a complete hierarchy of dignities was constructed, radiating in a pompous galaxy through the whole social system, and culminating at top in the dazzling

pivot of the Emperor. All being arranged, and the *Senatus Consultum* finally digested, the Senate repaired in a body on the 18th May to St Cloud, where Bonaparte stood prepared to receive it, having by his side Josephine, and around him a brilliant circle of attendants. Cambacérés, now designated to be Arch-chancellor of the Empire and President of the Senate, advanced at its head, and bowing lowly, delivered the following speech, which is worthy to be recorded, from its striking significance both of the character of the event and of the spirit of the time:—

‘Sire, four years ago the love and gratitude of the French people confided to your Majesty the reins of government, and the constitutions of the State have already vested in you the choice of a successor. The more imposing appellation which is this day awarded to you is therefore but a tribute which the nation pays to its own dignity, and to the necessity it feels for giving you continual testimonies of a respect and attachment which every moment serves to augment.

How, indeed, can the French people reflect without enthusiasm on the happiness they have experienced since Providence inspired them with the idea of throwing themselves into your arms? The armies were vanquished, the finances in disorder; public credit was annihilated; factions contended for the remnants of our ancient splendour; the principles of religion and even of morality were obscured; the frequent changes of power left the magistrates without consideration.

Your Majesty appeared. You recalled victory to our standards; you restored order and economy in the public expenditure; the nation, cheered by the use to which you applied them, resumed confidence in its own resources; your prudence hushed the transports of party; religion saw its altars rise again; in fine, and this, doubtless, was the greatest miracle wrought by your genius, the people, whom turbulent agitation had rendered impatient of all restraint and inimical to all authority, you taught to cherish and respect a power which was exercised only for their glory and tranquillity.

Happy the nation which, after so long a series of troubles, finds within its bosom a man capable of lulling the storm of conflicting passions, of reconciling all interests, and of uniting all suffrages!’

He concluded by intimating the decree of the Senate, which, without waiting for a confirmatory appeal to the people, at once proclaimed, NAPOLEON, EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH! Reiterated shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* greeted this announcement, which were caught up and re-echoed through the apartments of the palace, and by the eager multitude outside thronging the courts and garden. The new Emperor replied in his usual brief and emphatic tone. He said:

‘ All that can contribute to the welfare of the country is indissolubly linked with my happiness.

I accept the title which you judge advantageous to the glory of the nation.

I will submit to the sanction of the French people the law establishing hereditary government.

I trust that France will never regret the honours with which she shall invest my family. At all events, my spirit will no longer be with my posterity when it shall cease to merit the confidence and attachment of “the great nation.” ’

With renewed acclamations the important ceremony closed. The senators withdrew from the presence of the sovereign they had created, making profound obeisances as they retired. Napoleon preserved that calm and dignified attitude which distinguished him on great occasions of ceremony. His empress, Josephine, timorous, anxious, yet happy, betrayed a visible emotion welling forth in sympathetic tears. The suffrages of the nation failed not to ratify the act of the Senate: more than three millions and a half of votes were lodged in its favour, not three thousand against it. Never, therefore, with such general unanimity did a great community abjure the last shreds of liberty and clothe itself in the motleyed livery of servitude, dazzled doubtless by an ability and glory the most transcendent ever known on earth!

The imperial court was established on a footing of splendour and studious etiquette far surpassing that of the most magnificent and stately in Europe, eclipsing in its imposing grandeur the reminiscence of Louis XIV.’s gorgeous pageantry. The brothers and sisters of Napoleon received the title of Imperial Highnesses; the great functionaries that of Serene Highnesses; all high dignitaries that of Monseigneur. Eighteen of the principal generals were appointed marshals; several of the French prelates were nominated by the Pope to be cardinals; and on the anniversary of the 14th July, a distribution of the insignia of the new Order of the Legion of Honour was made by the Emperor in person under the lofty dome of the church of the Invalides. The equality of the Revolution was merged in a distinction of ranks almost endless in diversity and name; yet that great principle was ostentatiously proclaimed to be still predominant, since merit, and not birth, was the sole passport to honours, which were attainable by the lowest in the social scale; a fact indubitable, and strikingly exemplified in a sub-lieutenant of artillery sitting on the throne of Charlemagne, whilst the Revolution itself had been anew consecrated by the blood of another Bourbon!

With the establishment of the Empire certain changes were introduced in the constitution of the State, tending to concentrate all power in the Council of State and in the Senate—the obedient

instruments of Napoleon's despotic will—and to render even more null than heretofore the inglorious parliament of the Tribunal and Legislative Body. At the same time an apparent check was placed on the executive with regard to arbitrary arrests and the censorship of the press. Two permanent committees were named in the Senate, to whom appeals might be made on behalf of individuals imprisoned by the government, and of publications prohibited or mutilated by the police. But these publications included such only as were in the form of books, newspapers being left to the unrestricted superintendence of the police. The only one permitted any freedom of language was the *Moniteur*, the official organ of the government, many of whose articles were written by the Emperor himself. In these he discussed questions of European policy with extraordinary vigour and tartness of expression, maintaining angry controversies with foreign journalists, particularly British, and throwing out menaces, taunts, and reproaches with unsparing lash on all sovereigns or ministers who exhibited any tendency to thwart his views or censure his proceedings. The death of the Duke d'Enghien had occasioned a prodigious ferment in the three principal European courts—those of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. The violation of the German territory naturally provoked the resentment of the two first; but standing in terrible awe of their domineering neighbour, they were content to manifest it rather by a sullen coldness than by any more distinct expression. But the young emperor of Russia, already panting to play an important part on the stage of the world, and over-estimating the influence of his position, openly protested against the flagrant breach of public law, and put his court in mourning for the murdered prince. This latter demonstration aroused all the ire of Napoleon's impetuous temperament, and he retorted in stinging terms with reference to the death of Paul, which he seemed to attribute to Alexander's connivance, since none of the assassins had been punished. Thus the relations of the two emperors speedily became inimical: and although not leading to immediate war, their alienation prepared the way for a fresh coalition against France. Prussia, still embroiled with Austria on the affair of the German indemnities, had been almost on the point of concluding an intimate alliance with Napoleon, who tempted her cupidity by the offer of Hanover; but she now recoiled from this union, and sought to strengthen herself by an alliance with Russia. Alexander would have made this alliance offensive; but Frederick-William, cautious and hesitating, intent to preserve his neutrality, declined to render it more than defensive, contingent upon further aggressions in Germany by France. This act on the part of Prussia was not published at the time; but from her altered demeanour, Napoleon suspected the truth, and he began to regard the continent with a more

jealous eye, fearful it might rise against him when engaged in his gigantic project against England.

It behoved him therefore to quicken his execution of that great design ere the machinations of his enemies had grown to a head. The recent internal events had detained him at Paris, but he had never for a moment relaxed his preparations or wavered in his purpose. The armament had been materially increased since the preceding winter, and he now determined to cross the Channel with 150,000 men, the more effectually to extinguish all chance of resistance. The gun-brigs and boats had, in repeated encounters with British frigates, shown that they were quite competent to maintain a combat with large ships, and the scheme of forcing a passage, which had been at first derided as chimerical, was now regarded as quite feasible. So perfectly matured were all the arrangements, that the 150,000 men might be all embarked within two hours, although the whole flotilla could not get to sea from Boulogne and the adjacent harbours of Etaples, Wimereux, and Ambleteuse, in a single tide. Hence the condition of assured success was still in acquiring the mastery of the Channel for at least forty-eight hours, and this Napoleon bent all the powers of his mind to accomplish. The better to hoodwink the British Admiralty, he planned the manœuvre to be executed from Toulon, whither he despatched one of the best French admirals, Latouche-Treville, with instructions to carry out the design, fixing him to reach Brest and join Ganteaume by the beginning of September. In the meantime, he himself repaired to Boulogne, where he was received by the army with a boundless enthusiasm, for it was in transports of exultation at its chief being raised to be an emperor. The greatest eagerness prevailed for the perilous enterprise in prospect: the desire of vengeance on a hated foe, and the hope of plunder in the richest capital of the world, animated all breasts with an impatient ardour. To increase the martial fervour of his troops, Napoleon resolved to distribute among them the crosses of the Legion of Honour, designed for those who in every grade had distinguished themselves by superior courage, and with this view to hold a military festival of the most imposing description. Near Boulogne, and on the shore of the sea, was an extensive natural amphitheatre, rising by successive gradations to a considerable height. In the centre, facing the semicircular acclivity, was placed an immense throne, on the steps of which were clustered in brilliant array the great dignitaries of the State and the marshals of the Empire; on its summit was seated the august person of the Emperor. The army was ranged in columns, radiating from the throne; the infantry occupying the van, the cavalry, with their sparkling helmets and accoutrements, crowning in serried tiers the towering slopes. The soldiers and officers selected to

receive crosses were called from the ranks and conducted to the foot of the throne, where Napoleon administered to them the oath of the order, and invested them with the prized insignia. It was the 16th August, the anniversary of his birthday. He could see with his telescope the white cliffs of Albion, the object of his aching solicitude, and to whose startled population he made known his presence by the simultaneous thunder of 900 cannons!

Rejoicing thus in the spectacle of his might, and exuberant with high anticipations, it was with poignant vexation that he learnt the sudden death of Latouche-Treville at Toulon. This event deranged his plans, and necessarily led to a postponement of the expedition, which was accordingly deferred to the winter; for with all the force of his armament, he felt too dubious of its safe passage, unless under the covering protection of a fleet, to hazard the fearful experiment. He seized the opportunity of this delay to visit Belgium, and make a tour up the Rhine, both to inspect the frontier provinces of his empire, and to receive the homage of their inhabitants in his new dignity of Emperor. Passing through the principal towns of Belgium, he halted at Aix-la-Chapelle, which celebrated city he reached on the 3d September. Here he met the Empress, who came to join him in this ancient capital of the Franco-Germanic empire. Filled with ever-expanding ideas of aggrandisement, and emulous to revive the sway and glories of the renowned mediæval conqueror, he descended to the vault in which his remains are interred, and gazed with emotion on the tomb containing the ashes of Charlemagne. At Aix-la-Chapelle, too, he received the Austrian and other foreign ambassadors, who presented their credentials to him as Emperor of the French, and, accompanied by them, proceeded to Mayence, where several German potentates had already assembled to greet his arrival. These princes bowed before him as to their liege lord, and strove with keen rivalry to win his favour, and to derive acquisitions from his potential arbitrament. The base servility and selfish rapacity displayed by them afforded him gratification; for the one ministered satisfactorily to his pride, and the other promised him the lever whereby he might hereafter dismember Germany, and divide it into hostile confederacies. After enjoying for some weeks this parade of his power and pre-eminence, he took his departure for Paris, where he had designed a most extraordinary ceremony to amaze and dazzle the world.

In grasping the sceptre of supreme rule, and trampling on the necks of submissive millions, Napoleon still embodied the triumph of the Revolution, and its leading principle of the sovereignty of the people. He was still the impersonation of democracy overriding a benighted aristocracy, although he sought to rear upon

it a fabric compounded of the antagonistic elements it had subdued. But he felt all the incongruity of such a creation, and was, moreover, sensible of the insecurity of its foundations. He had no dread of its crumbling so long as he lived, since he reposed implicit confidence in his fortune and genius, but he regarded the distant future with apprehension. Notwithstanding the constant assurances of the stability of his dynasty in the government of France, he was deeply impressed with the conviction that it needed to rest on a surer basis than mere popular election or military greatness. Hence he had endeavoured to wring from the legitimatist pretender, afterwards Louis XVIII., a renunciation in his favour of his right to the crown; which the Bourbon prince had refused to give, as he might have foreseen, and which, if he had obtained it, could have conferred on him not a vestige of title beyond what he already possessed. He then bethought him of giving his royalty a consecration derived from religion; and as his imagination ever soared into the marvellous, of having that consecration bestowed by the very head of the church itself—by the supreme pontiff of the Catholic world. Since the days of Pepin, the popes of Rome had been accustomed to crown the emperors of what was called the Holy Roman Empire, who usually repaired to receive the papal unction in the Eternal City itself; but Napoleon determined, as a signal evidence of his unequalled predominance, to draw the Pope to Paris, for the purpose of anointing him with the sacred oil. By such an unprecedented spectacle he at once made manifest his superiority over other monarchs of the earth, and secured all the guarantee of its permanence which sacerdotal confirmation could impart. He had opened negotiations accordingly with the papal court, to obtain from it the concession he desired; and after much difficulty, had extorted from it a reluctant assent. Pius VII. himself was well content to give Napoleon a proof of his gratitude for the restoration of the Gallican Church, and judged truly that his presence in France might advance the cause of religion: but he was tormented by a vague presentiment of danger, in committing himself within the walls of so terrible a focus of revolution and infidelity as the city of Paris. One material motive, however, weighed with him to overcome his repugnance—namely, the hope of recovering from the generosity of the modern Charlemagne those possessions of the church originally conferred by the piety of the ancient. This hope Napoleon took care to flatter, whilst avoiding any distinct pledge binding him to a restitution of the Legations: and so, with mingled anticipations of hope and fear, he set out on his journey to the banks of the Seine, giving his benediction to the kneeling population of Italy as he passed on the way; for he was met by crowds, who flocked to regard him as a victim travelling to

assured fetters, and who would never return to dispense among the faithful the soothing boons of absolution and beatification reserved to the successor of St Peter. Throughout the route he was received by the French authorities with a deference and attention which both astonished and delighted him; at Lyons he was met by couriers from the Emperor, who besought him to hasten his progress, and who had taken up his abode at Fontainebleau to welcome him before his entrance into Paris. Leaving that palace on the forenoon of the 25th November, he advanced to anticipate the arrival of the pontiff; he met him on the road, and the two sovereigns alighted to embrace. They afterwards proceeded in the same carriage to Fontainebleau, at the threshold of which stately residence stood Josephine and a glittering throng of attendants, to render fitting homage to the spiritual chief of the Catholic realms of Christendom.

The ceremony of the coronation was appointed to be performed on the 2d December in the cathedral of Nôtre-Dame. On the night previous, the nuptial blessing was pronounced by the Pope on Napoleon and Josephine, who had been hitherto united only by the tie of a civil marriage. The day dawned clear and bright; an unclouded sun shone in the blue firmament through a chill atmosphere of frost: the papal procession first left the Tuileries, rich in all the decorations of ecclesiastical pomp; the Empress followed, escorted by pages in gorgeous liveries, and accompanied by the ladies of her court; next appeared the Emperor in a magnificent glass carriage profusely gilded and emblazoned, and clad in the imperial vestments; before and around whom the princes and dignitaries of the empire, the marshals and generals of the army, senators, ministers, councillors, in endless yet orderly continuity. The cathedral had been fitted up for the occasion with bespangled draperies hanging from the roof in voluminous folds; two chairs were placed in front of the altar for the Emperor and Empress; a sumptuous throne, raised on twenty-four steps, stood in the background of the venerable edifice. On seats prepared for them were ranged sundry princes of Germany, the foreign ambassadors, the deputies of towns, the members of the magistracy, the Senate, the Tribunate, the Legislative Body; intermingled with whom, and in graceful contrast, were women sparkling with jewels, and all the tinsel apparel of female taste and vanity. When the Pope entered the principal aisle, all present arose, and 500 musicians saluted him with the solemn strophes of the hallelujah. The cardinals and prelates of the Gallican Church passed before his throne with lowly reverences, and to each he bowed benignantly in return. Amidst an anxious and expectant silence, at length Napoleon advanced up the church, knelt for a moment at the altar, and seated himself by the side of Josephine on the

chair appropriated to him. The resounding music was hushed, and the Pope moved to the Emperor, whom he blessed and anointed. He then girded him with a consecrated sword, placed in his hand a sceptre, and held the crown to put on his head. But this Napoleon, as he had designed, took from him, and placed himself on his head; not roughly, as stupid malignants have represented, but with an expressive gesture marking his intention, which was immediately comprehended by the whole assemblage, and occasioned a thrilling sensation. Napoleon then crowned Josephine, who knelt before him suffused with tears. Afterwards he led her amid reverberating vivats to the great throne: the lappets of his mantle being borne by the Princes Joseph and Louis; the robe of the Empress by the Princesses Eliza and Caroline. Here he took the oath prescribed by the constitution, repeating it with his hand resting on a copy of the Evangelists. The ceremonial being thus concluded, suddenly the edifice rang with a burst of acclamation; *Vive l'Empereur!* was shouted in stentorian echoes, music gave forth its loudest note of jubilee, artillery roared in signalled response. The Pope stood on the steps of the altar, and assisted by his cardinals, celebrated a grand mass, giving to the solemnity the suitable termination of a hallowed devoutness.

Such was the phase of the Revolution in 1804, represented by an Emperor, and consecrated by a Pope. The halo of sanctity was thus thrown around it, the most perfect that could be given on earth; but in reality it could receive no additional sanction from a priestly benison. Yet this solemn coronation of Napoleon by the head of the Catholic Church was attended with important and beneficial consequences: the Royalists and the Revolutionists both grew more reconciled to his government. The former might without disgrace obey and even serve him, now that he had the seal of papal infallibility upon his brow; the latter rejoiced in the junction of the sword and the cross to consolidate the Revolution, and secure one of its most material results—the distribution of the confiscated property of the clergy and emigrant nobility. Henceforth the bearers of historical names eagerly sought employments in the palace and in the public service of the State, to the great gratification of Napoleon, who had the weakness to dread the sarcasms of that emasculated noblesse, and to respect in it an aristocracy of birth, which it became his grandeur to enlist around him. To many of these he restored their unalienated estates, and otherwise loaded them with benefits, vainly seeking to purchase their attachment by the strong ties of gratitude: not even he could extinguish aristocratic bigotry, or the inveterate prejudices of caste. His favours were accepted, for base and servile is the brood before the panoply of power; but they were requited with dissembled hatred: he was still the

plebeian, the *novus homo*, inferior in the essential quality of descent to the most insignificant of the puppets he played with on German or Italian thrones, to the most contemptible of the very sycophants who fawned on him, and could point to some antiquated charter of nobility!

CHAPTER XIV.

AUSTERLITZ—TRAFALGAR—JENA—EYLAU—FRIEDLAND—TILSIT—
JANUARY 1805 TO JULY 1807.

In the agony of her fear, and in the dread hour of her peril, when menaced by the undivided weight of the colossal power the madness of her rulers had built up, England cast anxious eyes around upon the world, in earnest quest of succour. With the cankerous sore of Ireland gnawing at her vitals in retribution of unnumbered wrongs, of a secular persecution the most systematic and ruthless known of Pagan or Moslem against contrary creeds, with a civil war over smouldering in her bosom, she had no ally to aid her by a timely diversion to distract the attention of the enemy, and relieve her of his infinite pressure. The calamity of her situation, moreover, was such, that even in peace she could have no hope of safety, since her adversary would but grow in strength during the respite, and she must needs continue the war as her sole desperate instrument of salvation. Never, surely, was a country brought into so dismal a state by the blind perversity of those who directed its counsels! Napoleon, judging well the true position of affairs, and aware that he might assume the credit of desiring peace without being thwarted by an acceptance of his overture, again addressed a direct letter to George III. upon his elevation to the imperial title, beseeching him to restore peace between the two nations of France and England, which he declared were at war without any definable object. The British cabinet replied in those general and evasive terms which it had used from the commencement of its hostilities against the Revolution, and which it varied with the shifting prospects of success, declaring that peace had been at all times the object of its solicitude, but that it was compatible only with proper safeguards for the future security of Europe. This language meant, in reality, that the French power must be reduced; how far, would depend on the chances of the war, otherwise peace was impossible. At the present moment such language was undoubtedly true, but had been so for the first time during the

contest, and from stale repetitions, had come to be considered in the light of vapid triteness.

From the dilemma to which the policy of Pitt had reduced England, the egregious folly and unscrupulous actions of Napoleon himself tended chiefly to rescue her. The seizure and execution of the Duke d'Enghien had aroused the indignation of all the European courts, but the Russian alone had ventured openly to manifest its feeling, which, in addition to an altercation respecting Piedmont and the occupation of Hanover, had eventually led to a cessation of diplomatic intercourse between the cabinets of Paris and St Petersburg. This estrangement presented too favourable an opportunity for Pitt to let it slip without making an effort to draw Alexander into an actual war against France. The predisposition of that young monarch was singularly auspicious to his design. He was filled with the ambitious desire of playing the part of moderator in the great quarrel between France and England, and had sought to gain the concurrence of Frederick-William, with whom he had formed a personal friendship in an interview at Memel, in assuming an attitude of armed mediation between those belligerent powers. But the Prussian king was too much afraid of Napoleon's proximity to adopt so decisive a step, and was, furthermore, of too timid and hesitating a character: he studied to preserve his neutral position by contradictory professions to Napoleon and the czar; and like all persons who equivocate and vacillate at a critical moment, acquired for himself the unmeasured contempt of both. So notorious was the duplicity of his conduct, and the rapacity which formed the sole guidance of his policy, that neither of them would trust any secret to his honour, or scrupled to offer him bribes as to a common political prostitute. Alexander, however, still cherished the design of interfering peremptorily in the dispute which agitated the world; and with this view had revolved certain schemes for reconstructing the balance of power in Europe, which, as indicative of his inexperience and that of his advisers, were strangely chimerical and romantic. Their basis, nevertheless, was excellent, resting on the constrained disinterestedness of all the great European powers, who were to make sacrifices for the consolidation of a universal peace, and the erection of sufficient barriers against the encroachments of Austrian and Prussian as well as of French and English ambitions. Russia herself was to be curbed by the reconstruction of Poland as a kingdom; for with the enthusiasm and generosity which marked his early character, Alexander denounced its partition as a crime of his grandmother, which it behoved him to repair. Such ideas were sufficiently crude and unpractical to be readily combated and overturned by so astute an intellect as that of Pitt; and in the end he moulded them into a plan which, as he studiously

contemplated, had little less for its object than the curtailment of France to its proportions prior to 1792, without reference to any particular form of government. This aim was the most consonant at once to the security and to the aggrandisement of Great Britain itself; and by inducing Russia to assist in its accomplishment Pitt unquestionably displayed great ability, foresight, and diplomatic tact. The treaty embodying the attendant stipulations was not signed until April 1805; but active negotiations had been carried on during the whole winter with the view of procuring the adhesion to it of Sweden, Prussia, and Austria. The first gave to it a ready and spontaneous adherence; but Prussia resisted all advances, both from her fears and from her secret intrigues with Napoleon to obtain the cession of Hanover, for which long-coveted prize she was again content to violate her word, and sacrifice the cause of European independence. Austria would have immediately joined the new coalition, but she feared to bring upon herself prematurely the crushing weight of Napoleon's arm. She therefore temporised, giving to Alexander confidential assurances of her favourable dispositions, until the outrageous conduct of the French Emperor supplied her with an incitement she could not withstand, and compelled her to take up arms to save Europe, if possible, from an arrogant and insufferable dictatorship.

France having become an empire, it was deemed expedient by her puissant ruler that the dependent republics should undergo an analogous change. Holland, it is true, was not considered sufficiently acquiescent to be converted into a monarchy, or rather the time was not yet come to place a French prince on its throne; therefore a tool of France, in the person of Schimmelpenninck, was named Grand-Pensioner, and invested with an absolute executive power, under the ægis of a French army. But the Italian and Ligurian Republics were viewed as direct appanages of the imperial crown. Consequently, by a decree promulgated in a solemn diet of the Senate, held on the 17th March 1805, Napoleon, in exercise of his naked right as a conqueror, created the Italian Republic a hereditary kingdom, and nominated himself monarch thereof under the title of King of Italy. He had originally designed to confer this Italian sceptre on his brother Joseph, but the latter declined it, from his repugnance to wield so palpably vain a bauble: so, grasping it himself, he appointed his stepson Eugene Beauharnais to be viceroy, and intimated that upon the return of a general peace the crowns of France and Italy should be severed. In the meantime, as if to demonstrate the hollowness of such a pledge, he resolved to be crowned at Milan with the iron crown of the old Lombard kings, and for this purpose set out from Paris in the beginning of April. But a still more important object attracted him to Italy at this time, connected with his

scheme for the invasion of England. Whilst apparently intent only on the pomps and vanities of his grandeur, he was in reality engaged more assiduously and comprehensively than ever in maturing his grand plan for gaining temporary command of the Channel. Spain having declared war against England, in consequence of the seizure by British frigates of her treasure galleons from Mexico, he had at his command all her ports and ships, and he lost no time in using them to the best possible advantage. In principle his plan was still the same, but upon a more extensive scale, and devised upon a yet profounder combination. During his whole journey he maintained a daily correspondence with his minister of marine, Admiral Decres, reiterating instructions, calculating chances, providing for all possible contingencies, and prepared at a moment's notice to fly to Boulogne and strike the decisive blow for universal dominion. The more effectually to lull suspicion on the part of the British ministry, he affected to be exclusively absorbed with matters the most remote from his enterprise. He halted at Lyons several days, to inspect the restored manufactures of that celebrated emporium; again at Turin, to receive the homage of his Piedmontese subjects; again at Alessandria, to examine the vast fortifications there in process of construction; again on the field of Marengo, to hold a grand military tournament; and it was not until the 8th of May that he finally reached Milan. On that day he made a triumphal entry into the capital of Lombardy, amidst salutes of artillery and the acclamations of the people, who hailed his presence with rapture, as of one who had won his first laurels among them. On the 20th he was consecrated by Cardinal Caprara, in the great cathedral of Milan, with the forms used of old towards the emperors of Germany, and he afterwards placed on his own head, as he had done the imperial diadem at Nôtre-Dame, the iron crown of the Lombards. The magnificence of the ceremony, and the recollections it awakened, kindled all the enthusiasm of the impassioned Italians, and they gloried in their fancied regeneration under the auspices of the great conqueror, who had freed them from a hated bondage, and given them at least the name of a nationality.

If Napoleon could have restrained his own vehement impulses, or checked his pride, it is probable he would have attained all the objects at which he ever aimed. But although by nature most sagacious, and conscious, too, of the benefits of policy, the prosperity and adulation with which he was surrounded had inflated him to such a degree, that he scorned to take counsel of prudence, as if it would betray in him the weakness of a condescension. This disposition was encouraged in him by the contemptible opinion he had formed from experience of kings, and even of nations, who he found ever ready to cringe before him for some paltry gift or some

gewgaw bubble. Regarding them as things he might toss to and fro at pleasure, he cast no forethought around, but when a desire seized him, he proceeded straightway to gratify it. Thus he could not resist the temptation of incorporating the Ligurian Republic with France, although the simplest common sense urged him at least to defer such spoliations until he had become absolute master of Europe by the conquest of England, and in defiance, moreover, of his own recent public promise pronounced before the Senate, not to annex any additional territories to his empire. His assumption of the title of King of Italy was in itself an indiscretion he would have acted wisely to avoid, since it gave the deepest umbrage to Austria, and inspired in her the liveliest apprehensions, betokening as it did an intention to absorb the whole peninsula under his sway; but at that she might have winked for the moment, had not his audacious lust been so conspicuously manifested. Not content even with the annexation of Genoa and its territories, he extinguished the little republic of Lucca, and conferred it on his sister Eliza, married to a Prince Bacciochi, to hold as a fief of the French crown. Such flagrant acts of usurpation were actual challenges to the forbearance of the European powers; and although he could depend on the abject acquiescence of the king of Prussia, he had misgivings touching the Emperor Francis, whom he commenced to catechise in his usual intimidating tone as to his military preparations. That monarch was in fact making ready to begin hostilities, having formally acceded to the coalition between Russia, Sweden, and England; but he evaded as yet a distinct enunciation of his designs, waiting until the succours of his allies—the subsidies of Pitt and the legions of Alexander—could arrive to his assistance.

Meanwhile Napoleon, whom it was difficult to deceive on such a point, took precautions against any sudden aggression of Austria by increasing his forces in Italy and towards the frontier of the Rhine; and after visiting in succession all the principal cities of his new kingdom, particularly Genoa, where he held a magnificent festival, he secretly departed for France, to meet his admirals at Boulogne. On such slender threads do the destinies of empires often apparently hang, that two very improbable chances alone prevented that meeting, in the accident of which was involved the fate of the world for weal or wo. The last combination of Napoleon was, that Villeneuve should sail with twelve ships from Toulon, join the Spanish squadron of seven ships under Gravina at Cadiz, and thence bear across the Atlantic to Martinique, where his arrival was to be awaited by Missiessy, who had previously proceeded thither from Rochefort with five ships, and wrought terrible havoc among the British West India islands. The same destination was assigned to the Brest fleet, of twenty-one ships, under Ganteaume, who had

instructions to issue out of that harbour during the first gale which should blow off the British cruisers, pick up a French and Spanish division lying at Ferrol, and join Villeneuve, so as to swell their united force to fifty sail of the line. Such an aggregate of strength would be sufficient to overbear all opposition, as the British fleets were sure to be scattered in different directions, and sweeping into the Channel, afford an effectual protection to the passage of the flotilla. Such was the scheme, and the probabilities were in favour of a successful execution of it. Villeneuve succeeded in baffling the observation of Nelson, left Toulon in safety, doubled the Straits of Gibraltar, joined to his own Gravina's squadron, breasted the stormy Atlantic, and arrived without accident at Martinique on the 14th May. Missiessy had returned to Europe after his successful cruise, and Ganteaume failed to make his appearance, the equinoctial season having passed over with such unprecedented calmness, that not a single gale had occurred to facilitate his egress. But in June fresh orders reached Villeneuve from Napoleon to retrace his course back to Europe; and after picking up the squadron in Ferrol, to effect his junction with Ganteaume at Brest itself, where the latter lay in the outer roads ever ready to sally forth, and under the shelter of powerful land batteries. So far, the British government had no idea of the actual plan designed for the destruction of England, but intelligence from Nelson at last aroused it to a true sense of the awful predicament in which it stood. That extraordinary man had scoured the Mediterranean and crossed the Atlantic in quest of Villeneuve with only nine ships, and yet with perfect confidence of annihilating if he encountered him. This, however, he failed to do; but learning his abrupt return to Europe, he immediately conjectured that it was in accordance with some device for deblocking the French and Spanish ports, and concentrating an overwhelming force to execute a project of invasion. Accordingly, he sent advice to England by several swift-sailing vessels, one of which, freighted with greater destinies than Cleopatra bore from Actium, outstripped Villeneuve, and gave the timely warning. Sir Robert Calder, who commanded the blockading squadron off Ferrol, was immediately reinforced, so as to raise him to fifteen sail of the line, and he had instructions to intercept, if possible, Villeneuve with the allied fleet. He actually fell in with him about forty leagues from Ferrol on the 22d July, and after a partial conflict in a thick fog, captured two of his Spanish ships. The exploit was perhaps not very brilliant on either side, but it was productive of immense consequences. Although Villeneuve gained Ferrol without sustaining a very severe loss, in an engagement of twenty ships against fifteen, which Napoleon, through his slavish press, manufactured into an absolute victory, yet he was com-

pletely discouraged by the result of the action; and what was of greater moment, the real design of the Emperor was revealed. From that moment its execution became extremely difficult; yet he persisted, nevertheless, in having it at least tried. He sent the most peremptory orders to Villeneuve to leave Ferrol and make for Brest, telling him he might sacrifice his own fleet, if by its ruin he could disengage Ganteaume. 'Be defeated,' he said to him, 'even destroyed, provided that by your efforts you open the portals of Brest!' But the French admiral was not to be inspirited even by the prospect of so heroic an immolation: he knew full well he had little chance of reaching Brest, now that the British Admiralty was on the alert; and after a faint show of stretching towards the north, upon intelligence of a fleet approaching, he turned his head and made all sail for Cadiz. That capacious roadstead he entered on the 21st August, the very day on which Napoleon had fondly expected him at the mouth of the Channel.

Ever since his arrival at Boulogne, the impatience of the Emperor had been extreme to put in execution his gigantic enterprise, which he confidently speculated would crown his most ambitious hopes, and insure him the mastery of the world. To beguile it, he held constant reviews, put the troops through the operations of embarking and disembarking, caused a mass of 100,000 infantry to defile before him on the beach, and maintained an incessant correspondence with the numerous naval and military officers stationed on different points of the coast. But as the time wore on, and still his fleets did not appear, his impatience began to grow painfully intense. Austria was now openly arming, and he had not a moment to lose. When Villeneuve first went into Ferrol he raged violently against him; but when he learned his final retreat to Cadiz, he burst into a passion the most furious perhaps of his stormy life. He denounced him as a villain, a traitor, a coward, and overwhelmed his minister Decres with invectives for recommending him to the command. All his prodigious labours in the preparation of the flotilla, all the vast expense he had incurred, were now in vain; and well, indeed, might he feel unutterable vexation. He sent for the intendant Daru, who often acted as his amanuensis. That personage found him striding up and down his apartment soliloquising in vehement exclamations. 'What a navy!' he cried; 'what an admiral! What sacrifices thrown away! My best hopes are frustrated! This Villeneuve, instead of being in the Channel, where do you think he is? He is at Cadiz!' He continued for some time to exhibit all the symptoms of a boundless rage, when suddenly becoming calm, he said, 'But come, Daru, sit down; listen, and write.' He then proceeded, with perfect composure of voice and manner, to dictate the plan

of the impending campaign against Austria in Germany, assigning with minute distinctness the points of departure and movements of every corps in the army, tracing the routes of each, from the remotest quarters to their places of junction, insomuch that upon a base of departure 200 leagues in extent, and lines of operations 300 leagues in length, the stations appointed were subsequently reached, place by place, and day by day, as far as Munich. Such was the wonderful capacity of this man for war, such his power of organisation, his comprehensiveness of intellect, his grasp of details, his forecast of contingencies!

With a deep-drawn sigh then, but with a promptitude befitting his altered views, he abandoned the project he had so long cherished, of conquering England by a direct invasion. The hazard of the experiment undoubtedly lay only in the passage of the Channel, since, if he had landed on her southern coast with 120,000 men, the same who afterwards subdued all the most powerful armies and warlike populations of Europe, she could have opposed no effectual resistance against him, but must have fallen, to live only in many glorious reminiscences. The profound combination he had devised for accomplishing that passage in safety was defeated, but by accidents only, and certainly not by any foresight or judgment on the part of the British government. Indeed it never was at any time acquainted with the magnitude of Napoleon's preparations for the enterprise, much less with his entire scheme for realising it; so admirably could he dissemble his purposes and means, so effectually puzzle and hoodwink his enemies. But in truth it was not difficult for him to blind them, since their own pride and conceit aided him very sufficiently. It was their fashion not merely to underrate him, his resources, and his genius, but to traduce him by the foulest calumnies, and to assail him with a malignity wholly inconsistent with sobriety of discrimination or appreciation. Hence although a deep alarm pervaded the British islands, their inhabitants remained in a happy ignorance of the overwhelming danger to which they were exposed, reposing upon their own invulnerability with too much of insular confidence, and upon their traditional superiority to the warrior-sons of Gaul. The reality of the design itself was even questioned, and by many the armament of Boulogne was regarded as a mere feint to cover other and darker purposes: a belief which, for obvious reasons, Napoleon took pains to foster: and so general did it ultimately become, that it was adopted as a maxim of British faith, which it was treason to contest, and which has been dispelled only by the transparent light of incontrovertible testimony.

On the 29th August the tide of invasion began to roll from the shore of the Channel to the banks of the Rhine, greatly to the satisfaction assuredly of the people of England, who rejoiced

sincerely at the favourable efflux. The flotilla was still left at Boulogne, to be used hereafter if occasion served; and a camp of 30,000 men was also maintained on the coast, so as to keep alive solicitude and apprehension. The remainder of the immense host was directed on Strasburg, but by different routes, to conceal the movement, in order that the Austrians might be taken by surprise. At the same time Marshal Bernadotte was ordered to march from Hanover through Hesse into Franconia, and General Marmont from Holland up the Rhine, their point of junction being fixed at Wurtzburg, in the electorate of Bavaria. In the interim, Napoleon himself repaired to Paris, whither sundry important affairs called him requiring adjustment before he plunged to the shock of war with Eastern Europe. Among these the most pressing was the derangement of the finances. Considering the vast amount of forces he maintained, both naval and military, his government was an economical one. His budget of expenditure for the year 1804 had been estimated at 700,000,000 francs (£28,000,000 sterling), but the estimate had fallen short of the reality by 62,000,000 francs (£2,500,000 sterling), the principal cost of the Boulogne armament having fallen on the service of that year. When viewed in comparison with the sums lavished on expeditions by the British government, the charge must be accounted as extremely moderate, and evincing a superintending care on his part at once rigid and effective. In no respect, indeed, did he present a greater contrast to his principal foe, Pitt, than in his financial management; for whereas he was circumspect, frugal, and averse to contract debt, the latter was reckless, profuse, and ever ready to enlarge the vortex of the public liabilities. Still, he had an arrear of 62,000,000 francs to provide for, accruing upon the last year, which was likely to be increased by a further deficit on the present one of 1805. The produce of the taxes, however, had risen materially, from the return of order and the growth of general prosperity, so that it amounted, even upon the scale of 1801, to upwards of 560,000,000 francs (£22,500,000 sterling), exclusive of all the indirect taxes abolished at the commencement of the Revolution. These being duties of excise on articles of consumption, Napoleon reimposed under the name of *droits réunis*; and which, though at first unproductive, promised in time to yield a large augmentation to the yearly revenue. Other expedients of a temporary character he adopted to meet the existing deficiency, which resolved themselves, in reality, into an extra issue of notes of the Bank of France, making them serve, in the emergency, the office of Exchequer Bills in England. As the credit of that establishment was good, such a resource sufficed for the moment, although, by becoming so completely entangled with the government, it was exposed to incur all risks that might affect the latter, and was, moreover,

subjected to serious danger from the scarcity of specie and the difficulty of obtaining it, which was felt not only in France, but over the whole of Europe. This was owing chiefly to the cessation of remittances from the Spanish American colonies, upon which Europe was accustomed to depend for its necessary supplies. No country felt the privation so severely as Spain herself, the embarrassments of whose financial state tended to aggravate those of the French exchequer, since through the transactions of an extraordinary personage named Ouvrard—who enjoyed the reputation of boundless wealth, and of being the most expert financier of the time, and who was in reality a daring, fertile, and overweening schemer—the two treasuries had been drawn into a species of partnership, for the greater facility of raising money. This connection proved especially burdensome to France, who was saddled with the obligations of a country utterly insolvent, and which in the end produced a financial crisis that might have resulted in another national bankruptcy, but for the rapid and astounding triumphs of Napoleon over the armies of the Coalition, whereby confidence was restored, and in its wake flowed ease and abundance.

To enter upon the campaign in which he was to meet in arms for the first time the hardy soldiers of the North, issuing from the wilds of Scythia and Sarmatia, to intermingle their strength with that of Austria's well-tried legions, Napoleon left Paris on the 24th September, one of his latest acts being to abrogate the fantastical Republican calendar, and to ordain that France should resume the one common to the civilised world on the 1st of January 1806. He was accompanied by the Empress Josephine, who with anxious affection had intreated permission to accompany him as far as Strasburg, and he reached that frontier town on the 26th. Here he immediately passed his army over the Rhine. It was the finest, undoubtedly, that the world had ever seen. It consisted, in the whole, of 190,000 men, distributed under an organisation the most efficient and best-matured of any known since that of the Roman legions under Cæsar or Pompey. It was divided into seven corps, six of which were under the command of marshals, all bearing celebrated names—Davout, Augereau, Ney, Bernadotte, Soult, Lannes, and one under General Marmont. Each corps, varying in number from 17,000 to 40,000, was complete in its force of infantry, with an addition of light cavalry and field artillery, and was subdivided into divisions, comprising from 5000 to 7000 men each, and placed under the command of separate generals, acting in subordination to the marshals. The whole of the heavy cavalry, with the horse artillery, was united under one command—that of Marshal Prince Murat, brother-in-law of the Emperor—and kept in reserve, to be used in decisive conjunctures. Lastly, the Imperial Guard,

composed of picked men, and forming a chosen corps of 7000 men, remained in reserve around the Emperor, and at his immediate disposition. Such was the army now pouring through Hesse, Baden, and Wurtemberg, hurrying to reach the banks of the Danube ere the enemy scarce knew it had decamped from the cliffs of Boulogne. Posted on the Adige, moreover, to guard the kingdom of Italy, was another army of 50,000 men, under Marshal Massena; whilst one of 20,000, under General St Cyr, overawed the court of Naples at Tarento. Thus the active forces of Napoleon at the commencement of the campaign amounted to 260,000 men actually under arms, independently of the German contingents, which gave him 35,000 in addition. Besides these, he had 150,000 men distributed in dépôts, including 80,000 conscripts raised by anticipating the levy of 1806, continually under training, and ready to take the field to supply vacancies in the ranks of the GRAND ARMY, as Napoleon designated his principal host. To encounter this prodigious mass of troops, the allies were preparing to muster in all nearly 350,000 fighting-men; but they were scattered, and incapable of the rapid concentration given to the French troops. Two Russian armies, of 60,000 men each, were advancing through Poland and Galicia; 80,000 Austrians under the Archduke Charles were directed on Italy; 30,000 under the Archduke John were stationed in the Tyrol; and 90,000 under General Mack were on the Inn; finally, 30,000 Russians and Swedes were collected in Pomerania. It was evident that, in this state of dissemination, if Napoleon could outstrip the Russians in the valley of the Danube, he might crush Austria before they arrived to aid her.

The elector of Bavaria had the dire misfortune to lie between these puissant belligerents, and over his prostrate body must they trample to measure their swords. In vain he implored the two emperors to permit him to remain neutral: he had no cause of quarrel with either; he wished to remain at peace, he and his loyal people. But it could not be; for one or other he must decide, and commit himself to take part in the war. On one hand stood Mack with sword uplifted, threatening to smite him if he hesitated; on the other was the harsh voice of Napoleon, warning him from afar of fearful vengeance if he failed to join the banner of France. Between the sense of instant danger and the fear of future ruin, the poor monarch vacillated in piteous uncertainty. At last the dread of Napoleon prevailed: he fled from Munich in the dead of night, and took refuge with all his forces at Wurtzburg, whither Bernadotte and Marmont were moving by forced marches to protect him. Mack immediately crossed the Inn, overran Bavaria, and seized upon the important position which he had it so much at heart to occupy—namely, that of Ulm, which had always been considered by the Austrian generals as

the strongest defensive position against an inroad of the French. It had been held by Kray against Moreau in 1800 for several months, and against a direct attack it was almost invulnerable. On this account it was the design of Napoleon to turn it; and by a manœuvre similar in character to the passage of the St Bernard, to get behind Mack, and compel him to surrender with all his army. Instead, therefore, of penetrating through the defiles of the Black Forest—the usual route from the Rhine to the Danube—he merely made in them demonstrations sufficient to deceive the Austrians, and meanwhile wound round the base of the Swabian mountains by Carlsruhe, Stuttgart, Nordlingen, to Donauwerth, which, pushing forward with his usual celerity, he reached with his vanguard under Soult on the evening of the 6th October, and on the following day crossed the Danube, debouching completely into the rear of Mack, to his unutterable amazement. He instantly seized upon all the points of communication by which the Austrians might have escaped him; and after sundry hot engagements, drove them definitively within the walls of Ulm, in which he closely invested them. Finding himself thus hemmed in without any hope of succour, since the Russians could not arrive in time to relieve him, Mack saw no alternative but that of capitulating, which he accordingly did on the 20th October, surrendering his entire remaining army as prisoners of war. In the previous encounters he had lost about 30,000 men killed and captured; nearly 30,000 had contrived to escape into Bohemia and the Tyrol by long circuits; 30,000 remained to defile before the conqueror, and deposit at his feet their arms. Unlike his more modest conduct towards Wurmser at Mantua, Napoleon enjoyed all the honours of his triumph in person. Standing on an elevated plateau, he received the swords of Mack and his officers, whilst in the vale below the Austrian soldiers passed with downcast eyes on their way to a dismal captivity.

This unparalleled catastrophe, by which, within three weeks from the opening of the campaign, an army of 90,000 men was utterly annihilated, appeared so incredible, that throughout Europe, and especially in England, where any pretence was eagerly seized to detract from the merit of Napoleon, it was ascribed to treachery on the part of General Mack. The Aulic Council indeed pretended to be so convinced of the fact, that it consigned the unfortunate man to prison for twenty years. Yet the imputation was wholly groundless. That he was a very incompetent person, and unfit to contend against so profound a tactician as Napoleon, is most true; but his appointment had been strongly recommended by Pitt, and he only obeyed the orders of his court in pushing forward to Ulm, where from the first he was compromised in his communications by the power of Napoleon to throw Bernadotte and Marmont on his rear. It had never

entered the head of himself or of any other Austrian officer, that the French would advance to the Danube except by the defiles of the Black Forest, or from the direction of Schaffhausen, in either of which cases they must be arrested before Ulm; consequently he kept no look-out towards Franconia: and furthermore, neither he nor his government had the smallest conception of the movement from Bonlogne to Strasburg. This, in truth, was the grand cause of the disaster, since the Aulic Council was thereby induced to take the inconsiderate step of commencing offensive operations before the junction of the Russians. Assuredly Mack might have offered a more strenuous resistance, might have held out longer, might have displayed greater firmness of determination even in the last extremity; but his deficiency in the requisite qualities of a general should have been detected beforehand, and the British minister's approval of him not assumed as an all-sufficient passport of his capacity. At the same time many circumstances might be adduced in exculpation of his conduct even as a general: hampered as he was by injunctions from the Aulic Council, by insubordination among his officers, and by considerations for the personal safety of the young Archduke Ferdinand, who was associated with him in the command. Be this as it may, however, there is no doubt that an Austrian army of 90,000 men was destroyed when under his command, and that sufficed to cover him with the stigma of indelible disgrace in the opinion of the world, without an unjust charge of treachery being super-added. Meanwhile Napoleon, who, of all commanders ancient or modern, knew best how to profit by all the consequences of victory, lost not a moment after the capitulation of Ulm in precipitating his troops down the valley of the Danube, hoping again to anticipate the Russians in his arrival at Vienna itself, that celebrated metropolis of the House of Hapsburg, which had once been the barrier against the flood of Eastern conquest, but had now no Sobieski to rescue it from the grip of the Western depredator.

Wending his victorious way along that mightiest stream of Central Europe, exulting in his ascendant star, suddenly an icy pang shot to his heart, and staggered him in his pride, for a dirge of wo assailed his ears from the bosom of the ocean. Mack might be to him a sound of sweet savour, for it spoke of brilliant triumphs; but Nelson brought with it only echoes of humiliating discomfitures. On the very day after he had taken the Austrian army captive, his own fleet had perished in the greatest of naval battles. It was again the hero of the Nile, that marplot of his earlier destiny, who dealt him the grievous blow. In the height of his exasperation at Villeneuve's retreat to Cadiz, he had ordered Decres to displace him in the command of the fleet, alleging that his cowardice would prevent him from again putting

to sea. He nominated Rosily to succeed him, and directed that the combined fleet should be moved into the Mediterranean, even in face of an equal British force. Decres, who was not blinded by the passion of his master, and appreciated the motives of Villeneuve's conduct, was anxious that he might redeem his fame by some good service; and delaying the departure of Rosily, he sent word to Villeneuve of Napoleon's anger and of his present desires, exhorting him at once to leave Cadiz, unless the blockading squadron was actually superior to his own. Eager to wipe away the stain of pusillanimity from his name, the French admiral incontinently acted upon this advice, since it was known to him that Nelson had only twenty-seven ships of the line under his command, whereas he himself had thirty-three; and he accordingly sailed out of the haven of Cadiz on the 20th October. Nelson quickly descried him, and prepared joyously for the coming fight. He had a presentiment of his own death, but of death in the arms of victory; and he was content. He divided his fleet into two columns, retaining the command of one in person, and giving the other to Vice-Admiral Collingwood. He distributed among his captains instructions for their conduct in the battle; and when wearing down upon the enemy on the morning of the 21st, he hoisted at the masthead of his flag-ship *Victory* the signal for ever famous in naval annals: '*England expects every man to do his duty!*' Cheers burst from the crews of all the ships as this signal was repeated through the fleet, and never did combatants rush to mortal strife with greater ardour or confidence of success. It was the plan of Nelson, in accordance with his favourite manœuvre, to cut the allied line, and that in two places, by his double column. The French and Spanish ships were drawn up in one long irregular line, stretching north and south off Cape Trafalgar; the British columns were to windward, and advanced with all the impetus of a favourable breeze. Collingwood was the first to dash into the very centre of the allied fleet, and draw upon himself the fire of several antagonists. Nelson pierced the enemy in the northern quarter, and soon the battle raged with unequalled fury. Not a single British ship failed to get into action, whereas at least eight of the French and Spanish took no part whatever in the conflict. Thus, by dint of superior skill and resolution, the former gained the advantage of strength in the actual encounter, although numerically inferior. The result was the most decisive that ever occurred in an engagement at sea. In less than five hours, eighteen of the allied ships had struck their colours, of which seventeen were captured, and one exploded in the midst of the fight. Villeneuve himself, with two of the Spanish admirals, were taken prisoners: Gravina was mortally wounded, but he succeeded in effecting his retreat into Cadiz with eleven ships: Dumanoir sailed off with four French ships, which

were ultimately captured by Sir Robert Strachan near Cape Ortegal. Thus was the naval power of France and Spain annihilated at a blow; and never again was Napoleon, notwithstanding his resources and his perseverance, able during his whole reign to send forth another large fleet. His chance of conquering England by a direct invasion was consequently at an end.

Yet momentous as were the consequences of this great victory, it cost the British dearly, through the loss of their incomparable admiral. Leading the van of his column into action, Nelson had been exposed for some time alone to the fire of several of the enemy, one of them, *Santissima-Trinidad*, being a four-decker, and carrying 130 guns. With needless daring he walked his quarter-deck, decorated with the crosses of four orders, whereby he rendered himself a conspicuous mark for the French riflemen perched in the shrouds of the *Redoubtable*, against which he was lashed hull to hull. He received a shot in the shoulder, which buried itself in his backbone. He sank on the deck, saying to Hardy his captain: 'Hardy, the French have done for me at last.' 'I hope not,' said Hardy. 'Yes, yes, I am killed,' returned Nelson; and he was immediately carried below. He told the surgeons to attend the other wounded lying in the cockpit, as they could be of no use to him. He survived, however, for nearly three hours, during which time he was continually asking for news of the battle. At length Hardy came to him, gazing on him with deep emotion. He informed him that fifteen of the enemy had struck. 'That is well,' said Nelson; 'but I bargained for twenty. God's will be done. Thank God, I have done my duty.' His articulation began to grow faint, and his complexion livid. 'Hardy, I am sinking,' he gasped; 'I am going fast.' Hardy asked him what were his dying commands. 'To anchor the fleet,' he replied with an earnest effort—'anchor the fleet;' with which words on his lips he died, leaving behind him a name that eclipses all others in the annals of maritime warfare. Truly it may be said of him he was the saviour of England, for without his providential genius, it is difficult to say what might have been her fate. Collingwood succeeded to the command of the fleet on his death, and thought fit to disregard his dying injunction. During the night, as Nelson no doubt had foreseen, the wind, which had been completely lulled during the cannonade, arose violently, and at last blew a perfect hurricane. The ships were obliged to cast off most of their prizes, some of which ran into the Bay of Cadiz, others foundered on the coast, four were purposely sunk, and the whole that finally remained to the English were only eight, including the four subsequently captured by Strachan. Thus the trophies of the victory were nearly all lost through the blunder or perverseness of Collingwood. Nevertheless, he had borne too gallant a part in the battle to be visited with censure: he was

ranked as second only to the redoubtable hero that had fallen, and received all the rewards a grateful nation could bestow on a prized defender. The remains of Nelson were interred with a magnificence and solemnity befitting the lustre of his fame and the priceless value of his deeds. England rejoiced, but amidst her smiles she shed generous tears of lamentation over the bier of the illustrious dead. As for Napoleon, with a meanness which was unfortunately not inconsistent with the otherwise elevated nature of his character, he buried the affair in profound secrecy, observed to all the officers engaged in it the same callous contemptuous silence, although many of them had displayed a fortitude and intrepidity which extorted the admiration of their adversaries; and so rigid was the control he maintained over the press, so complete his despotic system of administration, that it was not until the occupation of Paris by the allies that the French people learned for the first time any tidings of the **BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR**.

But his mortification at the loss of power on the seas was soon dispelled by the excitement of the game he was playing for empire on the land. Every step he advanced down the Danube enlarged the distance between him and France, and lengthened dangerously his line of communications. If Prussia should assume a hostile attitude at such a conjuncture, he must be placed in a situation of extreme peril. Yet so prone was he ever to aggression upon the slightest temptation, and so profound was his contempt for that most miserable court, that he had scrupled not to violate its territory of Anspach in the passage of Bernadotte's corps from Hanover, and thereby aroused its anger to a hazardous extent. He was at little pains to justify this unwarrantable proceeding, pretending that, by a previous convention with the Directory, the French armies were authorised to cross the dominions of Prussia in case of necessity; and he allowed the affront to fester until it wrought, even upon the imbecile mind of the king and his chief adviser Haugwitz, an eager desire of revenge. In this disposition of things, the Emperor Alexander suddenly appeared at Berlin, on his way to the theatre of the war, and succeeded, by the seduction of his promises and blandishments, in winning over Frederick-William to the views of the Coalition; but still he demanded, as the price of his co-operation for the deliverance of Europe, the same acquisition offered him by Napoleon in return for an alliance—namely, the cession of Hanover. The two monarchs, who had many points of similarity between them besides those of age and station, swore an eternal friendship, and cemented the vow by repeating it over the tomb of Frederick the Great at Potsdam, in a nocturnal visit to his modest cemetery. A treaty was concluded between them, by which Prussia undertook to mediate in

arms; and if Napoleon refused to replace things on the footing of the peace of Luneville, to join in the war against him. For this purpose she agreed to collect two armies of 80,000 and 60,000 men each; but at the same time she stipulated that she should not be bound to take the initiative in less than a month. Such a proviso in effect neutralised the treaty, since, before the expiration of that period, the contest would in all probability be decided; and whatever might be the issue of the event, the intervention of Prussia would be of no material consequence. If Napoleon conquered, she must, like other powers, succumb to his predominance; if he were defeated, she would not be needed to consummate his ruin. In such a position she had every motive for immediate action; but so afraid was she of prematurely committing herself, so distracted between her inveterate jealousy of Austria and her dread of Napoleon, so uncertain on which side the balance of profit most inclined, that she continued her temporising conduct, and with an almost incredible fatuity suffered the important interval to elapse during which she might have made her voice potential.

Aware of the treacherous dispositions of Prussia, but judging accurately that he had little to fear from her except in case of some signal reverse, Napoleon contented himself with fulminating against her terrible threats if she ventured to stir a foot, and boldly pushed his columns forward on Vienna. He detached Ney to overrun the Tyrol, which that intrepid commander speedily effected, compelling two Austrian generals to lay down their arms at the head of 5000 and 6000 men respectively. The first Russian army had arrived on the Danube under Kutusof; but the allies made no serious effort to arrest the progress of the French, and their vanguard, under Lannes and Murat, entered the Austrian capital on the 13th November, obtaining possession of the bridge over the Danube by a most audacious stratagem. Napoleon took up his residence in the palace of Schoenbrunn, from which central point he directed his operations both against the Austro-Russian army and against the Archduke Charles, who had fallen back from Italy on Hungary, after a desperate conflict with Massena at Caldiero on the Adige. His great aim was to prevent the junction of the Archduke with the main army, and to open his own communication with Massena; both of which objects, by the expansion and celerity of his movements, he effected. Kutusof retreated precipitately into Moravia, escaping with difficulty, and by the sacrifice of his rearguard, from the risk of being enveloped and taken, in order to meet the second Russian army, advancing under the Emperor Alexander in person. The Emperor Francis awaited the arrival of his Muscovite ally at Olmütz with scarcely 15,000 men, the wrecks of Mack's extinguished host. The whole of the allied forces being there united,

they amounted in all to about 90,000 men. Upon learning this concentration of force, Napoleon hurried in person to Brünn, with the view of striking a decisive blow before the Archduke could gain Moravia by Presburg, or Prussia be encouraged to declare herself. From the necessity of disseminating his army, he could not direct a mass of more than 70,000 men into Moravia, but he made dispositions to augment it on a day of general battle. This event it was of the utmost importance for him to accelerate, since delay was fraught with incalculable dangers. To the allies, on the contrary, procrastination was the surest policy; for the farther they lured Napoleon from the Danube, the more compromised he became, and the more certainly they could strike him with overwhelming strength. But two circumstances induced them to forego a defensive war, and to precipitate a collision: they suffered from a want of provisions, as no magazines had been collected in a country which it was never supposed would become the theatre of the war; and they were animated with a presumptuous confidence, through the vainglory of the young Russian officers who surrounded Alexander. These impetuously urged an immediate assault upon the French, maintaining that the secret of all Napoleon's successes lay in his always acting on the offensive, and they denounced as cowards the veterans who advised a more cautious policy. This eager spirit Napoleon took care dexterously to fan by a feigned timidity, which so far imposed on those hot-headed novices, that they concluded he was meditating a retreat, and they only the more fiercely vented their impatience to smite him. The Austrians would have recommended greater circumspection, but they were treated with contempt by their allies, and held of no estimation as tacticians or soldiers. It was natural for them to dread an encounter with the French, who had so continually defeated them; but the Russian troops were of a different mould, and would teach the boastful Gauls a lesson to remember. Such sentiments infected the sanguine mind and inexperienced head of Alexander himself, and it was irrevocably determined to attack Napoleon in his defensive position before Brünn; moreover, in order that he might not escape the entire destruction awaiting him, it was resolved to turn that position by outflanking him, and so cut him off from all his communications with Vienna, now the base of his advanced operations.

It was on the 1st of December that Napoleon, encamped on an eminence overlooking the plain of Austerlitz, perceived with a thrill of satisfaction his doomed enemy marching resolutely into the snare he had extended for him. Such was the sagacity and precision with which he divined the intention the allies would be prompted to form, that it has been supposed the Russian plan of battle was actually betrayed to him; for which charge there

seems no foundation but a malicious surmise. He discerned that their principal manœuvre would be directed to turn his right flank, and he purposely encouraged them to persevere in it by contracting, and apparently weakening himself on that point. Immediately opposite the centre of his position was a sloping eminence called Pratzen, which, after being traversed by the Russians in their flank movement, he proposed to seize, and thus cutting the hostile army in two, inflict on it not a mere defeat, but an irretrievable disaster. During the whole day he kept his eyes intently fixed on this hill, rejoicing in his heart as the successive columns ascended and halted on it; and when night fell, he was quite satisfied that he had conjectured rightly. 'To-morrow that army is ours,' he said to his marshals with a glance of triumph. Accompanied by them, he visited the bivouacs of the soldiers, by whom he was received with enthusiasm. Twisting wisps of straw to the end of their muskets, they set them on fire, and suddenly along the whole line blazed a vast illumination, at which the amazed Russians gazed with fear and wonder. Napoleon spoke to many of them, inspiring them with a boundless ardour, by mentioning their names and the scenes in which he had known them, and explaining to all his design for overpowering the enemy. With the quick apprehension of the French soldiers, his scheme was instantly understood, and he was answered with reiterated shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* He with difficulty tore himself from them, to enable them to take repose, so lively was the zeal and affection these sturdy warriors manifested towards him, when they called to mind that this was the eve of the anniversary of his coronation, which they regarded with pride as the work of their hands, and with exultation as the harbinger of to-morrow's victory.

By four in the morning Napoleon was again on horseback. The hill of Pratzen still engrossed his attention, but the sound of troops in motion from that point dispelled all remaining doubts. Lannes and Murat were stationed on the left, in the plain; he himself, with Soult and Bernadotte, stood in the centre; Davout commanded the right wing. A heavy mist hung upon the ground, which was broken and intersected with roads, rivulets, lakes, and villages. The action commenced before break of day, by the Russians under Buxhowden attacking Davout on the extreme right of the French line, in which direction a fierce conflict soon raged. When the sun at length rose, and showed the Pratzen dismantled of troops, Napoleon gave the signal to his marshals who attended him, and they instantly galloped off to take the lead of their troops. Lannes and Murat advance against Bagration and Lichtenstein, now in columns of infantry, now in charges of cavalry, and wage against them on the undulating plain a devastating combat. Soult scales the heights with rapid

and steady fortitude, contests them for a moment with Kutusof in person, and drives headlong down their slopes towards Austerlitz the Austro-Russian centre, headed by the two emperors. From this moment the battle is decided. Unless the allies can retake Pratzen, their left wing, 35,000 strong, is utterly lost. But Napoleon reinforces Soult with Bernadotte and Oudinot's famed grenadiers, and the attempt is hopeless. The Russian Imperial Guard, a chosen body of 10,000 men, commanded by the Archduke Constantine, rushes furiously on the French, and staggers them: they begin to give way, when the French Imperial Guard, under Bessieres and Rapp, flies to the rescue. The two Guards engage with desperate valour, and the battle pauses, as if the issue hung on the delegated prowess of the rival champions. The French override their opponents; and henceforth the centre and right of the allies are completely routed. Now comes the catastrophe to their left. Wheeling upon it on the rear and flank a dense mass of troops, whilst Davout still keeps it at bay in front, Napoleon disperses, pursues, captures, exterminates it. Whole divisions lay down their arms; others endeavour to force an outlet, and are cut to pieces; 2000 men escape across a frozen lake, the ice is shattered by the French artillery, and the whole sink into the water with a fearful howl! Never in all the annals of war was so horrible a scene. The loss of the allies is immense: 15,000 men killed, wounded, and drowned; 20,000 taken prisoners; and 150 pieces of cannon abandoned. The two emperors fly for their lives through the dark and desolate night, fearing the Corsican vulture in pursuit with talons outstretched to pierce and clutch them.

Such was the battle of Austerlitz, the most brilliant perhaps of all the victories won by Napoleon, since the result was so exclusively due to his combinations on the field. As Marengo had terminated the second, so did it dissolve the third Coalition. Two days after the battle, the Emperor Francis had an interview with Napoleon at an open bivouac near Urschitz, in which they arranged generally the terms of a peace, to be more maturely canvassed at Presburg. An immediate armistice was granted, on condition that the Russians withdrew from the Austrian territory, which there was no difficulty in conceding, as the vanquished monarchs had already quarrelled on the subject of their defeat, and were heartily glad to separate. In their conference, Napoleon treated his brother despot with marked deference, but upbraided him with being a mere instrument of England, whose commercial tyranny it was the interest of all sovereigns to resist. This was the language he from this time forth held towards the continental powers, as if his own dominion was a necessary corollary and a beneficial equipoise of England's upon the ocean, to which all should with alacrity submit. The deduction was not

particularly cogent nor consolatory, but the prostrated Cæsar was not in a position to controvert his argument. He himself, however, affected to consider it irrefragable, and was prepared to give it gigantic utterance. The sacrifices he demanded from Austria were enormous. Not only all her Venetian spoils, with Dalmatia and Friuli, were taken from her, and added to the kingdom of Italy, but even the Tyrol, one of her most ancient possessions, was transferred to Bavaria. To Baden and Wurtemberg also she was compelled to resign certain provinces, and her influence as head of the German Empire was completely annihilated. She was made to pay a war-contribution of 40,000,000 francs (£1,600,000), in addition to all the burdens that had been imposed upon her since the occupation of Vienna. All the military stores in her arsenals were carried off, no less than 2000 cannon and 100,000 muskets being taken from Vienna alone. In fine, the nauseous obligation was extracted from her of acknowledging two new royalties which Napoleon thought fit to create in favour of his allies Bavaria and Wurtemberg, upon whose monarchs he had, of his plenary power, conferred the title of king. The rights of the conqueror were indeed pushed to the last extremity; and Austria, who, three months ago, aspired to exercise control over affairs in Italy and Germany, was thrust back far from Western Europe, and confined to limits which reduced her almost to a second-class power.

This grievous curtailment of the Austrian empire, and injurious derangement of the political balance in Europe, was owing at the same time not so much to the victorious position of the French Emperor, who, by prolonging the contest, might have yet been involved in the greatest dangers, but rather to the hideous tergiversation of Prussia, who betrayed a meanness and perfidy on the occasion which filled up the measure of her eternal disgrace. In pursuance of the treaty of Potsdam, Haugwitz, her minister, had repaired to Vienna with the view of dictating to Napoleon the conditions of a European pacification; but waiting until after the battle of Austerlitz to make his communication, he was so intimidated by that event, that instead of holding the language agreed on with Alexander, he made the most abject recantation before Napoleon, propitiated his wrath by humiliating apologies, and at length actually signed a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance with him, on the old condition of receiving the cession of Hanover. Such a treaty was admirably suited to serve the purposes of Napoleon, since it enabled him to impose whatever terms he pleased on Austria, abandoned entirely to herself; and it embroiled Prussia with the Coalition, which she had so recently and solemnly sworn to uphold. Moreover, it gratified him by exhibiting a court which he so thoroughly despised in a degrading and felonious light, rendering it henceforth subservient to all the

shifting exigencies of his policy. Frederick-William, indeed, sought to introduce modifications into this treaty, the better to excuse his conduct in the eyes of Russia and England; but Napoleon would allow of no evasion, however flimsy, and compelled him to proclaim before the whole world his slavery, his duplicity, and his rapacity. Among the Prussian people, and in the army, the degradation of their country produced a feeling of mingled shame and indignation, which increased ere long to an ungovernable height, and contributed materially to provoke a catastrophe the most terrible that in modern times has befallen a nation under the curse of a dishonest and equivocating government.

The total failure of this last great effort to overthrow the power of France wrought such anguish in the mind of Pitt, that he straightway sickened and died. 'Alas, my country!' were his expiring words; and doubtless he repined bitterly at the precarious situation into which he had brought it. For upwards of twenty years he had ruled the destinies of Great Britain; and at the end of his career, he left her certainly mistress of the seas, but overloaded with a permanent debt of nearly £600,000,000 sterling, and exposed to dangers continually accumulating to threaten her existence. Yet he was a great minister, notwithstanding, in some senses of the term. The qualities of his mind were of the highest order; his determination and fortitude were indomitable; in oratorical attributes, in readiness and aptitude of debate, he was unrivalled. But in judgment and foresight he was deficient; and especially, in appreciation of the stupendous event of his time, was he lamentably at fault. In truth the nature of his education, the bias of his character, and his premature elevation to be a party-leader, all unfitted him to act with becoming calmness, freedom, or prudence in presence of the French Revolution. The English universities have earned a just renown for classical learning and mathematical science; but as schools for the training of statesmen, in a country whose greatness exclusively depends on its commerce and manufactures, none can be considered more wretchedly adapted. Aristocratic, exclusive, and intolerant, these seminaries may produce scholars highly accomplished and complacently erudite; but in general intelligence, in practical knowledge of men or of the world, in an enlarged understanding of human relations, they are necessarily untaught, and in a future public life, have rather to unlearn than to improve a previous store of useful enlightenment. Yet from such a retrograde college Pitt passed at once into parliament, and at twenty-three years of age became prime-minister of Great Britain. Thus, before he could mature his intellect by experience, he was committed to a particular line of politics, and that line opposed to the one he should, from association and tendencies, have embraced. But once linked to the Tory aristocracy, he could never dis sever the connection, and was

at last reduced, from the love of power and the spirit engendered by opposition, to form with it the most intimate alliance. Hence he entered the lists against democracy as promulgated by the French Revolutionists, and opposed it with all the vehemence of his character, fighting it with the rude weapons of active war, as if it had been a substance palpable to repel by physical force. The mighty and overspreading principle he took no pains to analyse or even to comprehend, judging it by results which sprang not from it inherently, but from the circumstances entangling its beneficent enunciation. War with France was perhaps inevitable, since the French themselves were eager to declare it; but the error of Pitt was, to make its object the punishment and humiliation of France, whereby he let slip every opportunity to terminate it advantageously. This object became with him and his party a passion, for the gratification of which they were ready to make any sacrifices; and assuredly if money could have accomplished their purpose, they squandered it with a profusion worthy of success. The extravagance of Pitt's financial administration was enormous: economy was a thing unknown: and every armament cost at least three times as much as it ought to have done. Pitt himself was careless and reckless of expenditure; and as long as he could go on contracting loans, he seemed indifferent how far he taxed the resources of the country. But personally, he disdained the venality and corruption prevailing around him: none knew better, or held in deeper scorn, the vileness of the creatures whom he was obliged to conciliate, promote, reward, and even act with. If he had lived at any other than this unhappy era, his name would probably have stood in history with the unclouded brightness decking that of his illustrious father. As it is, he is identified with the ignoble herd of the enemies to the progress of humanity and the liberties of mankind; but whilst identified, he towers far aloof, as Satan in the pandemonium of Milton.

His great antagonist Fox succeeded him in the British ministry. Feeling was often with this celebrated leader of the Whigs rather the mainspring of policy than deliberate judgment; yet the feeling was always generous and benevolent, he being in temper and disposition the very reverse of his opponent, for Pitt was singularly stern and unsympathetical, qualities by no means prejudicial to the conduct of affairs in a great nation. Approving, like every friend of freedom, of the first course of the French Revolution, he came, through the warmth of his opposition to hostilities against it, to be as it were compromised in its excesses, which grievously damaged him in public opinion, and neutralised his constant and heroic advocacy of the noble principles which he upheld. From his previous relations with Napoleon, his advent to office was immediately signalised by the commencement of negotiations for a peace. First Lord Yarmouth, one of the *detenus*

at Verdun, and subsequently Lord Lauderdale, held conferences with Talleyrand at Paris, which promised for a time to terminate in a successful issue. Russia likewise sent an ambassador on her part, M. d'Oubril, who had instructions to treat jointly with the British envoys, but whom the astute Talleyrand decoyed to sign a separate treaty, thus leaving England alone to contend against the pretensions of France. These were of a magnitude difficult to tolerate, for Napoleon had been recently emboldened to promulgate certain measures which he had long revolved in his mind. The phantom of Charlemagne with vassal kings around his throne was ever present to his imagination, and he aspired also to bear his imposing title of 'Emperor of the West.' First, however, he would have his circle of dependent monarchs, holding of him and his crown as their superior lord. By an imperial rescript, he announced that the dynasty of the Bourbons had ceased to reign in Naples, and that Joseph Bonaparte was appointed to govern in their stead. By the same sufficient warrant he converted Holland from a republic into a kingdom, and conferred its infant throne on his brother Louis; Joachim Murat, his brother-in-law, he fashioned into a German sovereign, and seated him, on the right of the Rhine, in a fertile territory around Wesel as Grand-Duke of Berg; his sister Eliza's principality he enlarged by the addition of Massa; and the beautiful Pauline, so celebrated for her charms and her voluptuousness, he created Duchess of Guastalla. His chief-of-the-staff, Berthier, to whom, of all his companions-in-arms, he was most attached, he made Prince of Neufchatel, a district ceded by Prussia in return for Hanover. The services of Talleyrand he rewarded by giving him the principality of Benevento; and Bernadotte reaped the benefit of his connection with the imperial family by receiving the principality of Ponte-Corvo: both being sliced from the patrimony of St Peter, and rendered fiefs of the crown of Naples. Within these new creations, and within the Venetian territories annexed to the kingdom of Italy, he reserved duchies to the number of twenty-two, endowed with considerable revenues, and intended as recompenses to his most eminent servants civil and military. An inferior order of counts and barons was to complete the new structure of a feudal nobility. But this splendid galaxy of crowned and coronetted effigies, doing homage at his imperial footstool, was not sufficient to satisfy Napoleon's soaring pride. He desired ardently to have beneath him, clustered under the sceptre of his protectorate, and accrediting the mere upstart hierarchy, a train of princes boasting a historical ancestry, the important element which, with all his omnipotence, he could not infuse into his elaborated system. Accordingly, he planned a union of the German potentates allied to France, the principal of whom were the kings of Bavaria and Wurtemberg and the Grand-Duke of Baden, by virtue of which they should transfer their feudal alle-

giance from the German Empire to the French. Hence arose the famed CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE, comprising within its fold those three monarchs, together with the Grand-Duke of Berg, the Prince of Neufchatel, and a number of minor princes, bound by ties of intimate alliance with the Emperor of the French, who was constituted its supreme head. This extensive rupture consummated the demolition of the old Germanic Empire after an existence of 1000 years, which had been for so many ages hereditary in the House of Austria, whose diminution of power was further embittered by a constrained descent from the throne of the Cæsars. Francis II. formally renounced the title of Emperor of Germany, and became Francis I., Emperor of Austria. Such were the vast dislocations caused in the territorial system of Europe by its revolutionary conqueror, whilst he invited England and Russia to enter with him into the bands of amity.

The successive announcement of these aggrandisements of Napoleon absolutely staggered the European courts. Fox especially, in his guileless simplicity, was amazed, for he had believed his friend of 1802 to be a truly great man, superior to the allurements of vulgar ambition, superior to the unclean lusts of pride and vanity. But he now saw, and with a sigh confessed, that no hope of living at peace with him remained; and the sad necessity was impressed upon his aching heart, that the contest must be continued until England herself was reduced to succumb, or the ruthless dominator of Europe was struck down. Such the melancholy conclusion that forced itself upon his mind; such the anxious foreboding that disturbed him, and assisted to hurry him to the grave within a few months of the adversary whom he had contended against for a quarter of a century! England saw her two greatest men carried off by death in the same year (1806), and it is difficult to say whose loss she at the time most mourned. But a ray of hope fell to cheer her gloom. Prussia at length had betokened a firm determination to emancipate herself from her degrading position; the Emperor of Russia, too, had refused to ratify D'Oubril's treaty; and thus it again seemed feasible to combine a vast military force to enfranchise Europe. An exaggerated notion of the superior excellence of the Prussian army generally prevailed, and was even shared in some degree by Napoleon himself. The fame of Frederick the Great still hung around it, and his mighty deeds invested it with a traditionary halo. The Austrian and Russian troops had been unequal to cope with the French; but they lacked the finished skill and prowess of the Prussians, who would soon prove an overmatch for the victors of Austerlitz. This confidence was largely partaken and expressed by the Prussian officers themselves, who indulged in very boastful bravadoes, and were even excited to use mutinous threats if their government longer

interposed to thwart their martial ardour. At this period the Prussian army was allowed a license and authority in the country which was most odious to its other inhabitants; and its officers, accustomed to lord it with insolence over burgher communities, even to censure the acts of the government, had grown to be the most truculent blusterers and brutal martinets ever known in a military organisation. The rankest aristocratic spirit, moreover, benumbed and poisoned the whole of them; promotion almost entirely depended on birth; not the slightest chance of rising to a superior grade existed for the common soldier, who acted and was treated as a mere machine. How different was it in the French army, where every man might aspire to reach the highest ranks, where indeed a sub-lieutenant had risen to be an emperor, and many private soldiers to be marshals and generals, and where individual intrepidity was sure to be recompensed with the cross of the Legion of Honour, the proud emblem of an approved warrior!

By the formation of the Confederation of the Rhine, the independence of Prussia was more menaced than even that of Austria, since it secured an immediate access to the French troops into her territories. But it was not so much the danger of such a league, as the manner of its creation, that roused her into anger. Napoleon never condescended to give her the least notice of his designs in Germany, which occasioned her a mortification the most sensible that could be imagined. She, who ought to be consulted on the most insignificant German question, to be left in ignorance of a change which involved the destruction of the Empire! Whilst sorely ruffled by so marked a slight, she learned with indescribable rage that Napoleon was treating with England on the basis of restoring Hanover to George III. The very bribe that had tempted her to fall from virtue, sacrifice her dignity, and contaminate her good name, was to be taken from her! Was there ever such treatment? Perhaps not; but she had deservedly brought it upon herself; and save that it was hoped she might avail to humble the overweening Emperor, it is probable she would have been left to her fate by the indignant powers she had betrayed. But she hastened humbly to beseech their aid; and Russia and England, alive to the importance of her accession, promised her the assistance of armies and subsidies. Thereupon she began to arm in earnest, and speedily drew upon herself the inquisitive eye of Napoleon. He was ever suspicious of coalitions, and promptly concluded another was in preparation when he perceived the bold attitude Prussia was assuming. To conclude was with him to act. He forthwith countermanded the march of his troops from Germany, which he had purposely procrastinated under every possible pretext, and prepared for immediate hostilities. He turned from the negotiations for peace

with a renewed appetite for war; he refused to give any explanations which might conciliate the Prussian court; he put to death a bookseller of Nuremberg for vending a pamphlet calling upon the German people to rise against him; he sent passports to Lord Lauderdale, who, poor man, still continued to talk of saving Sicily to the old king of Naples; and he started from Paris for the Rhine on the 25th September. His object was, as in the campaign of the previous year, to decide the war before the arrival of the Russians, by anticipating them on the Elbe as he had formerly done on the Danube.

On his part the king of Prussia had already left Berlin for Magdeburg. Prompted by the fallacious assurances of the generals around him, he had determined to initiate operations by assuming an audacious offensive. He had two armies in the field—one 90,000 strong, under the Duke of Brunswick, the same who headed the invasion of France in 1792; and another, counting 50,000 men, under the Prince of Hohenlohe; but of these 20,000 were Saxons. With such powerful forces, he might have intrenched himself behind the Elbe, and defended successfully against Napoleon the passage of that river. But the same ideas fermented in the Prussian staff as in the Russian before the battle of Austerlitz: it was held that in the offensive lay the grand secret of success. The queen, a beautiful and high-spirited princess, who possessed great influence over her husband, and had accompanied him to the army—Prince Louis, cousin of the king, a valiant and impetuous soldier—and the young nobility attached to the court—maintained with warmth this favourite dogma, and overruled by their vehemence the more cautious counsels of Brunswick. Hohenlohe also, a rash and presumptuous personage, openly scorned the command of that veteran, and with the tacit acquiescence of the weak king, took upon himself to act independently. Therefore, with an infatuation which is without a parallel in the history of nations, the king of Prussia abandoned the impregnable line of the Elbe, and advanced with all the forces of his monarchy to meet Napoleon in Franconia, taking no heed to form a reserve in case of disaster, to victual or arm his fortresses, or to take a single precaution to cover a retreat. Napoleon, on the contrary, whilst unsurpassed in daring and celerity, never committed himself into an enemy's country without adopting complete measures for securing his retreat; and on this occasion especially, when he foresaw the probability of a protracted war carried to a remote distance, he devoted immense resources to defend his rear, as well as to protect his whole empire from insult during his absence. His troops being already in the heart of Germany, they needed reinforcements only to enter upon the campaign. After halting at Wurzburg, where he received the members of the Confederation of the Rhine, and

married his youngest brother Jerome to the daughter of the king of Wurtemberg, Napoleon reached Bamberg, on the frontiers of Saxony, on the 7th October. Having ascertained that the Prussians had actually entered Saxony, and even crossed the Saale, he forthwith struck out his plan of operations, and prepared to inflict on them a calamity equally terrible with that which befell the rebellious Jews under the doomed scourge of Nebuchadnezzar.

One hundred and seventy thousand men formed the vast array he marshalled to achieve his purpose. As usual with him, he designed to turn the Prussians on the left, get behind them, cut them off from their communications, and reduce them to the necessity of fighting a desperate battle to regain the Elbe. In execution of this scheme he pushed through the defiles of Franconia, on the upper Saale, in three columns. Murat encountered the Prussian advanced guard under Tauenzien, and worsted it with slaughter; Lannes fell in with Prince Louis on the 10th, at the head of 10,000 men, repulsed, and slew him. This unfortunate commencement wrought a sensible reaction in the minds of the king and his generals. The queen was hastily removed from head-quarters, and the Duke of Brunswick resolved with all speed to make for the Elbe. In prosecuting this enterprise, he imprudently divided his forces after effecting a junction with Hohenlohe. Leaving the latter posted between Jena and Weimar, he made a transverse movement behind him towards Naumburg, with the view of gaining the Elbe at its confluence with the Saale. On both sides little was known of the respective dispositions. On the 13th, Napoleon reached Jena, upon which he had directed the bulk of his army, having despatched Davout and Bernadotte to seize the bridge of Naumburg. He was expected by the Prussians to have approached by Weimar, and they had consequently disregarded the avenue of Jena. On his part he supposed the whole Prussian army before him, and resolved to attack it the next day. With this view he carried the heights opposite Jena, and established himself for the night amidst his guard on the highest of them, called the Landgrafenberg. At break of day Lannes led the assault, surprising Hohenlohe, who looked for the French in an opposite quarter. But as they deployed in greater numbers, he perceived his error, gathered together his troops, and stood to make head against them. He called Ruchel to him, who occupied Weimar with 15,000 men, but he was utterly unable to resist the impetuosity of the attack. The French overbore the Prussians with a roughness the latter had not anticipated; and Murat, plunging among them with his redoubtable cavalry, routed them in all directions. The massacre was terrific; 12,000 men fell on the field, and 15,000 were taken prisoners. The soldiers dispersed, and fled for their lives across

the country. On the same day, and at the same hour, Brunswick's army, with the king in person, sustained a similar disaster at the hands of Davout at Auerstadt. Here the case was reversed as to numbers, the French being only 30,000 strong against at least 60,000. But from the nature of the ground, and the unprepared dispositions of the Prussians, their superiority was of little advantage to them. Davout repulsed their successive attacks with indomitable intrepidity; and their two principal chiefs, the Duke of Brunswick and Marshal Möllendorf, were both mortally wounded. At length, assuming the offensive, the French general assailed the disheartened Prussians; and succeeded in overthrowing them. Fugitives from Hohenlohe's army speedily communicated a panic, and in a few moments the entire army was disbanded. The king directed a swift retreat to Sommerda, having lost, at a single throw, in the hazardous game he played, the whole defensive resources of his kingdom.

The chief glory of this eventful day—such glory as results from an incontestable heroism—must be justly ascribed to Marshal Davout, of which Napoleon himself was painfully sensible, for he was very jealous of being eclipsed in military renown. In truth the result showed that he had not calculated with his usual precision, mainly by dint of overrating the stratagetic talents of his opponents; and if the enemy had not erred in a similar manner, he might have suffered, instead of inflicting a disaster. He placed unbounded confidence certainly in the qualities of his troops, which alone could warrant him in giving battle with precipitous ravines in his rear, particularly, as he himself supposed, against the combined Prussian army. As it was, the supineness of Hohenlohe and his own great superiority of force removed any danger of a reverse on his side; moreover, the utter rottenness of the Prussian army assured him an easy victory under any conditions. But if Brunswick had displayed a very ordinary promptitude, he would have saved his own army at least, although he might have been cut off from Berlin. Davout's encounter with him in his lateral movement was an unforeseen accident, and through the miserable jealousy of Bernadotte, who refused to aid his colleague, it could by no concurrence of favourable circumstances have been anticipated to end in his complete discomfiture. It is undoubtedly not upon the actual field of battle that a great commander exhibits his abilities, but in his enlarged combinations; yet it was the fortune of Napoleon to have lieutenants who aided him marvellously in their successful accomplishment. Desaix at Marengo, and Davout at Jena, achieved for him stupendous triumphs, when with less able and zealous coadjutors the fulness of his scheme might in both instances have been frustrated. Still, his merit as a master of the art of war is not in the least degree impeached thereby,

but rather enhanced, as nothing proves the superior capacity of a man more than his appreciation of others as fitting agents, and their cheerful subordination to him. In securing the advantages of his prodigious victory, Napoleon manifested more than his accustomed indefatigability. Distributing his forces, he pushed them rapidly in pursuit: all the Prussian artillery and baggage were captured; scattered parties of fugitives were picked up in all directions; 14,000 prisoners were taken in Erfurt alone, of whom 7000 were wounded; Hohenlohe, upon whom the king had devolved the chief command, was separated from Blücher, encompassed by Lannes and Murat, and compelled to lay down his arms at the head of other 14,000 men. Blücher himself made some strenuous efforts to extricate his troops, which amounted to 24,000 in number, most of whom had not been engaged in the battles, but was driven into Mecklenburg, and at last to Lübeck, where he also capitulated. Scarcely a man of the whole army, except the king and his immediate staff, escaped across the Elbe. So appalling a catastrophe struck with bewilderment the commanders of the Prussian fortresses: they surrendered them upon the first summons, although they might have stood sieges of considerable duration; and thus Magdeburg, Spandau, Cüstrin, and Stettin, fell into the hands of the conqueror without firing a shot. Napoleon made his triumphal entry into Berlin on the 28th October, after paying a contemplative visit to the tomb of Frederick at Potsdam, which he despoiled of some of its relics. He might have been content to annihilate the work of that architect of the greatness of the House of Brandenburg without rifling his hallowed trophies!

Intoxicated by the magnitude of his success, inflamed with ideas of his absolute sovereignty on earth, Napoleon yielded now to all the impulses of his grosser and more evil passions. In the bulletins he issued from day to day, he gave vent not only to the most unworthy feelings, but to stretches of power unheard of since Alexander parcelled out a yet mightier continent. He reviled the queen of Prussia in the same opprobrious terms he had formerly used towards the queen of Naples, and spoke of the king as a weak and imbecile creature, swayed by womanly levities and by ministers sold to England. The veteran Brunswick, respectable at least from his age and reputation, he upbraided with vulgar insolence, and at the point of death, despoiled him of all his dominions. A similar robbery he committed on the Prince of Hesse Cassel, who had taken no part whatever in the war. It was a sufficient crime for any individual, whatever his rank or station, to have evinced the least hostility towards him or France to merit condign punishment. In particular, the suspicion of a leaning towards England insured for its unhappy object his unmeasured rigour. Against that power he became

every day more exasperated, both from the opinion he began to indulge of its being treason to contest his supremacy, and from rage at being unable to wreak his vengeance on it. But he was determined to take all the measure of that vengeance within his capacity. By a decree dated the 21st November from Berlin, he prohibited the introduction of British merchandise throughout Europe, and ordained its confiscation wherever found, in ships, in warehouses, or in shops; he forbade all correspondence by letter with England, directed every Englishman taken on the continent to be imprisoned, and ordered that any vessel which had touched at a British port or colony should be seized and condemned. This constituted what has been called his 'Continental System,' by enforcing which, he trusted to ruin Great Britain by destroying her commerce, if he could not conquer her by arms. No sooner was the decree issued, than Marshal Mortier, who commanded an army in Hesse and Hanover, was instructed to occupy the Hanse Towns, Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen, together with the ports of Mecklenburg and Swedish Pomerania, confiscate all merchandise of British origin, and throw English traders into prison. A like barbarous measure he had already taken with regard to Leipzig and its merchants, whom he had ruthlessly pillaged as he passed on his way. Thus he established in all the countries subject to his arms a despotism of the most intolerable description, revolting to the common sense of mankind, and the ruinous atrocity of which happily rendered it of unstable continuance.

Not content with destroying the commerce of Germany, he imposed on its unfortunate inhabitants enormous contributions. On Prussia alone he levied 200,000,000 francs (£8,000,000 sterling), and on Hanover, Saxony, Hesse, the Hanse Towns, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, corresponding sums. These were to be paid gradually, in addition to the ordinary taxes previously payable, the administration of which he placed under the superintendence of French officers. In all these countries, in fact (except Saxony, which he admitted to a treaty of alliance), he organised his own government, exacting from the municipal authorities an oath of fidelity to himself; for he openly avowed his intention of holding all his conquests until England had been made to disgorge her numerous colonial spoils. He argued that the powers of Europe being instruments of England against France, they must partake the fortune of the war he waged against her, and supply him with means to humble her. Of the rights he supposed himself to have acquired, he gave a striking evidence in his conduct towards the Prince of Hatzfeld, a distinguished nobleman, whom the king, in passing through Berlin, had appointed to take charge of that city. A letter written by him to Hohenlohe, giving some details of the French army, was intercepted and brought to

Napoleon. He instantly ordered the arrest of the prince—eager to use a pretext for outraging the German nobility, which he had vowed to reduce to beggary—and consigned him to a court-martial for trial as a spy. Duroc and Berthier intreated him in vain to forbear from sullyng his name by so foul a murder: he was determined to have Hatzfeld shot. In this extremity Rapp and Duroc exerted themselves to throw in his way the Princess of Hatzfeld, a young and beautiful woman. Accordingly, she fell at his feet on his return from a ride, and he gave her an audience in his cabinet. She appeared before him trembling and weeping. The Emperor relented from his sternness, and giving her the letter, asked her if it were not in her husband's handwriting. She could not deny the fact. 'Throw it into the fire,' he said, 'and then the court will have no proof of his criminality.' Thus a woman's tears reclaimed him from his savage mood, and saved him from the commission of an inexpiable crime. Although naturally far from cruel, he could play the tyrant excellently well when he had a personal or political object to gain; and here, besides the satisfaction of smiting the German aristocracy, he desired to intimidate the Prussian authorities by a terrible example of the fate awaiting those who failed to stifle their patriotism in utter subjection to his transcendental sway.

During his own stay in Berlin, he sent forward his marshals over the Oder into Poland, in order to gain the line of the Vistula before the arrival of the Russians. Passing through Posen, Murat and Davout entered Warsaw on the 28th November; and Ney occupying Thorn at the same time, that important point was obtained. Napoleon in person followed his army to Warsaw, after maturing all the vast arrangements requisite for securing his line of communication through Germany to the Rhine. He had ordained a fresh levy of 80,000 conscripts, who were to be collected and drilled in depôts, to enable the reserves to be draughted as reinforcements to the Grand Army. But having to cover such an immense interval of country, he could not muster more than 100,000 men on the Vistula. The Poles received him with great enthusiasm, and solicited from him an immediate declaration of their independence. But this, from his dread of arousing Austria in his rear, he prudently postponed, amusing the Poles with vague promises, but carefully abstaining from any positive engagements. It was his intention to go into winter quarters on the Vistula, and defer hostilities until the spring, as the aspect of the country was infinitely more gloomy than he had been led to expect. Pine forests and swamps were its chief characteristics, and continual rains tended to render movements almost impossible. The troops suffered severely, likewise, from privations, and a feeling of despondency began to prevail among them, from which the mind of Napoleon himself was not entirely

free. His marshals generally condemned the advance into Poland as unnecessarily hazardous; and Lannes, in particular, gave loud expression to his discontent. The example of Charles XII. was quoted in sinister remembrance, and already the disaster of Pultawa seemed impending. Such disheartening auguries were drawn not only from the desolation and nakedness of the land, but also from exaggerated notions of the prodigious forces Russia might array on her own frontier. In reality, the capacity of Russia as a military power had been mightily overrated both by herself and others; for here, at the very threshold of her dominions, she could not muster above 90,000 men to confront an enemy who had come a thousand miles to pierce her. With the sad remnant of the Prussian strength, these formed altogether a force of above 100,000 men; and General Benningsen, who was eventually appointed to command them, resolved to prevent the French from settling down into cantonments so quietly as they desired. His operations speedily became so offensive, that it behoved Napoleon to take the field to drive him at least beyond the Narew, that he might repose through the winter in tranquillity. This he with much difficulty effected in three bloody and obstinate engagements at Golymin, Soldau, and Pultusk; but he was unable to strike any decisive blow, from the wretched state of the roads, and he returned to the Vistula growling like a lion disturbed from his lair. However, it was hoped Benningsen had been sufficiently repulsed, and the army retired into quarters upon a vast line stretching from Warsaw to Elbing and the neighbourhood of Königsberg. Ney and Bernadotte occupied the left of this line; and by an admirable movement of Benningsen from the Narew to the Alle, executed without being perceived by the French, they were taken by surprise on the 22d January. The Russians attacking suddenly, the two marshals fell back with precipitation, after suffering a severe loss; but rallying at Osterrode, they stopped the advance of the enemy until Napoleon had time to reinforce them. Forming one of those prompt resolutions which struck him as by inspiration, the Emperor determined to punish the temerity of Benningsen by enveloping and destroying him. For this purpose, whilst Ney and Bernadotte held him engaged on the left, he moved with celerity—for a hard frost had rendered communications as easy as they were before difficult—Soult, Davout, Murat, and Augereau on the point of Allenstein, where he would be on the rear-flank of the Russians. But Benningsen learned his danger by intercepting a courier with despatches for Bernadotte, and forthwith retreated, to obviate it. Pursuing the route in the direction of Königsberg, he was followed by the bulk of the French army, headed by Napoleon in person, who upbraided fortune for her unkindness, as one of her spoiled children. Murat charged the Russian rearguard

at Landsberg, and fought a severe combat with it on the 6th February: pushing onward even to Eylau, he forced Benningsen to evacuate that town the same night. The soldiers of both armies displayed a wondrous fortitude and hardihood in these incessant movements, the fatigue of which was unalleviated by even necessary sustenance. At length Benningsen determined to stand his ground; and on a wide plain behind Eylau, encircled by rising eminences, and dotted with farm buildings, he drew up to receive battle on the morning of the 7th. Lakes and ponds intersected the ground, but all were alike obliterated by snow and ice; a hazy fog hung in the air, and imparted to the scene a grim and rueful aspect. Napoleon planted himself in a churchyard, protected by the stumps of a few trees silvered with the hoar of frost. Thence he directed the onslaught, which the Russians resisted with 300 pieces of cannon vomiting showers of grape. Augereau's corps was swept away, and lost two-thirds of its number. Most desperate was the combat, but in the end Murat broke the Russian infantry: the French artillery retorted successfully on the Russian, and Davout and Ney appearing opportunely on the field, Benningsen at nightfall ordered a retreat. The slaughter was dreadful on both sides, and about equal; 50,000 bodies, a third of them corpses, strewed the horrible plain which was held by the French, being the only advantage they gained. The Russians retired with composure, and Napoleon was too shattered to pursue them. When he visited, as was his invariable custom, the field of battle on the following morning, he was oppressed by the fearful spectacle, and shuddered as he surveyed it. Groans—nothing but groans met his ear: his eye rested on blood-steeped snow, burned houses, livid and writhing bodies, mutilated limbs, carcasses of horses: he turned from the appalling scene; and even he, the insatiable man of war, confessed that such a sight was fitted to inspire dread and horror of the trade he prosecuted.

In this remote extremity of Europe, with hostile Swedes at Stralsund awaiting a British army, with Austria at his back eager to retrieve her losses, such a battle as that of Eylau was of perilous import to Napoleon. He himself knew it to be such, for he made an immediate overture of peace to the king of Prussia, who was obliged to decline it, from his engagements with Russia: at the same time he laboured to conceal the extent of the calamity by a more than usual mendacity in his bulletins, for which quality he had already rendered them sufficiently notorious: but he could impose only on his own subjects, who were solely dependent on him for information. But a fresh demand for 80,000 conscripts staggered the obsequious senate, and revealed the havoc his army had sustained. This was the third levy since the commencement of the war, constituting an enrolment of

320,000 additional men. The members of the Confederation of the Rhine were likewise ordered to increase their contingents; Massena was called from Italy with a large detachment; in fact reinforcements were summoned from all quarters, consisting not only of French, but also of Italians, Spaniards, Dutch, and Germans. As well to overawe Germany as to intimidate Austria, he collected a prodigious aggregate of forces, amounting in the whole to 450,000 men, of whom 360,000 were French, distributed and quartered in the conquered countries. Besides the Grand Army in Poland, he formed another of 100,000 men on the Elbe, and placed it under the command of Marshal Brune, ready to act upon the first suspicious movement by the court of Vienna. Thus prepared to confront all dangers, he put his troops into winter quarters between the Vistula and the Passarge, and undertook the siege of Danzig, one of the most considerable, if not of the strongest, fortifications in Europe. He fixed his own residence at Finkenstein, in the centre of the cantonments, and disposed the different corps around him, so that they might be promptly concentrated on any threatened point. Here he passed the remainder of the winter, incessantly occupied with the innumerable details arising out of the congregation of such immense masses of men; superintending everything in person, and devoting unwearied attention to supply the wants, promote the comforts, and cure the ills of his soldiers. At the same time he governed his empire from this distant encampment, having daily tidings sent him from Paris of the minutest affairs occurring in France. Conscious that the stability of his throne rested on the prestige of his military predominance, knowing the necessity of keeping the French dazzled, to preserve their attachment, and sensitive, consequently, to the least manifestation of public feeling, he kept an observant eye on all occurrences through Cambacères and Fouché, down even to the squabbles of opera dancers, composing and arranging all by his sovereign fiat. He formed plans for magnificent public works in Paris, as the structure of the Madeleine, which he designed as a temple dedicated to the Grand Army and its exploits: he appropriated aids to the relief of suffering trade and manufactures; hastened the organisation of the university; instituted prizes for literary, scientific, and medical works; ordered the payment to one man of science—Berthollet, who he learned was in embarrassed circumstances—of the munificent sum of 150,000 francs (£6000); and with his own hand drew up a specific plan for the government of the female school of Ecouen, which he had established for the education of the daughters of officers holding crosses of the Legion of Honour. He held peculiar views touching the proper duties of women, esteeming them in their appropriate spheres only as wives and mothers of families; accordingly, they were to be trained less in

mere graces and accomplishments, than in useful practical knowledge and household callings. He considered religion also essential to them. He said, 'The small degree of judgment possessed by women, the unsteadiness of their ideas, their destination in the social order, the necessity of inspiring them with an undeviating resignation and a mild and yielding charity—all this renders the yoke of religion indispensable to them. I am desirous that the school should produce not agreeable, but virtuous women; that their fascinations should be of the heart, and not of the mind.' With these ideas, it is not surprising that he entertained such an antipathy towards all women who interfered in politics, as the queens of Naples and Prussia; or who excelled in mental endowments, and were bold and critical, as Madame de Stäel; or who shone conspicuous for beauty, and attracted circles of admirers, as Madame Recamier. Both these latter ladies, with a meanness of jealousy and a pettiness of spite which would have disgraced a dancing-master, he directed to be banished from Paris, and eventually, by his persecutions, drove Madame de Stäel to take refuge in Russia. Such the mixture of everything that was magnanimous and exalted, ignoble and grovelling, in the mind of this extraordinary man!

From these multifarious cares in his war bivouac, amid the inhospitable region of Poland, Napoleon was startled by his old enemy Benningsen on the 5th June 1807. The Russian army had, like the French, been largely reinforced since Eylau; but it was still numerically inferior, from the Emperor having most imprudently embarked in hostilities against Turkey, and thus caused a diversion of his forces. In these hostilities he had been assisted by the British, who forced the passage of the Dardanelles, but were compelled to retire somewhat ignominiously from before Constantinople, through the exertions of Sebastiani and other French engineers sent to the sultan by Napoleon, and they were likewise defeated by the Turks in an attempt to gain possession of Egypt. Consequently, the Russo-Prussian army mustered in the whole not more than 125,000 men, with an actual concentration not exceeding 90,000, whereas the French army contained at least 160,000 men present under arms. Alexander had joined head-quarters in person, to which also had repaired his unfortunately Frederick-William. Thus three sovereigns were to be present at the coming battle, as at Austerlitz in 1805. From their superiority of strength, Benningsen could make little impression on the French by an offensive movement, whilst he incurred great danger of being himself outflanked and intercepted from Königsberg, in which were all his stores and magazines. He surprised Ney, and inflicted some loss on him; but was soon obliged to fall back, to preserve his communications. Napoleon pursued him with ardour, and attacked him in an intrenched camp at Heils

berg on the 10th June. A most murderous conflict ensued; which was wholly useless, since he might have easily turned the position, as he in fact did the next day. The Russians stood their ground with invincible bravery, as at Eylau, protected by numerous redoubts, which the French fruitlessly assailed with reckless daring. Twenty thousand men fell victims to this encounter, the loss of the French largely preponderating; and as the battle did not cease till midnight, both killed and wounded were left lying on the field between the hostile armies. On the following morning, the horrible spectacle of all the bodies lying naked was discovered, they having been stripped during the night by the camp followers of the two armies. A shout of horror arose from each of the belligerent lines, and hostilities were suspended until the dead were buried and the wounded removed. Benningsen was obliged to evacuate his position on the same day, and follow with all speed the course of the Alle to regain Königsberg. But Napoleon was too quick for him: despatching by the more direct route Murat and Davout on Landsberg, Lannes, Mortier, and Ney on Eylau, he outstripped the Russian general, and arrived at Friedland before him, which town stood on the left bank of the Alle, directly on his way to Königsberg. Reaching it, however, on the 14th June, and perceiving only the vanguard of Lannes's corps, Benningsen threw three bridges over the Alle, and crossed it with all his army, thinking the bulk of the French in his rear. This was precisely what Napoleon wished him to do. Concentrating a mass of 80,000 men upon him, having a deep river with precipitous banks at his back, and hemmed in upon a confined field, not enabling him to deploy, he took him in a position almost certain to entail his perdition. It was the 14th June: Napoleon rode with a radiant countenance along the lines. 'Soldiers,' he said, 'this is the anniversary of Marengo; an auspicious day for us!' With stubborn tenacity the brave Russian grenadiers fought under all the disadvantages of their situation; but the French artillery wrought a terrible havoc in their encumbered ranks, and Ney and Dupont charging them with irresistible impetuosity, they were broken and hurled back upon the bridges, whilst Oudinot and Lannes forced them on the right into the river. They refused, however, to surrender, and the carnage consequently was immense. Nearly 25,000 men of the defeated army were killed, wounded, or drowned, and Benningsen retreated with the remainder towards the Niemen, saving nearly the whole of his artillery, which had not been moved across the Alle, but no longer in a condition to keep the field; yet he was not actively pursued by Napoleon, who had scarcely any cavalry at his immediate disposition, since Murat was still in the rear. The fall of Königsberg was the necessary consequence of this decisive victory, and the French found within it vast accumulations of commodities, which fell opportunely to regale their craving

appetites. As Danzig had already been taken, the only town of all his vast dominions left to the hapless king of Prussia was the insignificant timber emporium of Memel.

Alexander was effectually humbled by this great disaster, and immediately sent an envoy to propose an armistice. Moreover, he was irritated beyond measure against his ally England, whom he justly accused of leaving him disgracefully in the lurch. The Whig ministry of Lords Grey and Grenville, which had succeeded to power after the death of Fox, proved signally incompetent to the conduct of the war; and it may be esteemed fortunate, in so desperate a crisis of affairs, that the inveterate bigotry of George III. occasioned its abrupt dismissal. Enlightened legislation was not so much the want of the times, as a vigorous direction of the national resources against the common enemy of the independence of Europe. Men of thought and liberal sentiment are not fitted for the stormy eras of convulsions: it is men of nerve, promptitude, and audacity who are required to weather such storms; and thus it happened that the gigantic despot was in the end struck down under the auspices of ministers the least intellectual that were ever known to rule a nation. At the formation of the coalition to assist Prussia, England had agreed to make a diversion on the continent in aid of the general cause; and this, it was understood, would be in conjunction with the Swedes in Pomerania. If indeed 50,000 British had been landed at Stralsund, and combined with 30,000 Swedes, they must have endangered Napoleon in his advanced position, probably emboldened Austria to rise in his rear, and enclosed him within a net, through which he could with difficulty break loose. The British forces, however, were employed in other quarters upon purely selfish expeditions, as impolitic as they were discreditable; and Russia had to bear the entire burden of the contest, even money being refused to her most earnest intreaties. Of such an abandonment she had every reason to complain, and Alexander determined to make peace with Napoleon on almost any terms. That great conqueror was anxious for peace likewise, since the opportunity was most favourable to him for negotiating, and he had no desire to push further his hazardous advance to the deserts of the north. It was agreed that the two emperors should have an interview; and as some distrust prevailed, it was appointed to take place on a raft moored in the middle of the river Niemen between the two armies posted on either side. Napoleon arrived at Tilsit on the 24th June, and the interview was fixed for the following day. At the same moment each emperor entered a boat in the presence of the assembled troops, and amidst the roar of artillery, was rowed to the raft and disembarked. They were attended by their principal officers, and upon meeting, they embraced. Alexander first broke silence: 'If you are enraged only against England,' he said, 'I hate her as much

as you do, and am ready to promote your enterprises against her.' In that case,' Napoleon replied, 'we shall readily agree, and peace is already made.' They retired to a tent, and had a long conversation in private. On the morrow a similar meeting was held, at which the king of Prussia was present, to whom Napoleon extended but a grim reception. The three monarchs afterwards removed to Tilsit, where Alexander and Napoleon grew to be singularly intimate and smitten with each other. Napoleon, in fact, completely dazzled the imagination of Alexander, and easily induced him to separate his cause from that of Frederick-William. He showed him that, by uniting, they might rule the world as they chose, and partition Europe according to their several interests. He would rule and absorb the West; the czar might take what he pleased of Turkey (excepting always Constantinople), Finland, and Sweden to boot, if it suited him. He consented, in deference only, as he professed, to his august ally, that Prussia should not be altogether extinguished, but reduced to the line of the Elbe, and shorn of her Polish provinces, which were erected into a separate principality under the name of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw, and conferred upon the king of Saxony, whom Napoleon had taken into his especial favour, and previously invested with the royal dignity. The provinces on the left of the Elbe, with Hesse, were given to Prince Jerome, who received them with the title of King of Westphalia. By secret articles, the two imperial dominators settled their scheme for dividing the whole of the Turkish dominions between them, by which France was to have all the Mediterranean dependencies, and for compelling *every power in Europe*, without exception, to close its harbours and declare war against England. Against the rigorous conditions imposed on Prussia, her unhappy monarch in vain protested; his seductive consort lavished her blandishments on the conqueror; but he was not to be moved by the allurements of female charms from his stern resolves. He insisted upon the conclusion of the different treaties as he had dictated them; and they were accordingly signed at Tilsit on the 7th July, after which the sovereigns separated in a solemn adieu; and so closed the famous congress of Tilsit, in which such licentious freedom was taken with principedoms, nations, and communities.

Thus raised to a pinnacle of human greatness which words are inadequate to depict, which the hyperbole of Oriental extravagance could not exaggerate, Napoleon turned his face again towards France, whither he returned, trampling, as he passed, on the prostrate populations. He bore with him innumerable spoils—trophies of art which he had rifled from conquered cities, and vast sums of money which he had exacted from subjected countries. The amount of contributions he levied on Germany—until the complete payment of which, the French army was to remain

in possession of its territories and fortresses—is stated at £25,000,000 sterling, but the Prussian accountants represent it as much greater. This was an enormous burden for a poor country to bear in addition to its ordinary taxation and the charges of supporting a numerous army, which were prolonged by the very magnitude of the imposition. Grievous, indeed, was the oppression under which the German people henceforth laboured, and bitterly had they to mourn the fatal errors committed by their princes. The French themselves were held in a bondage truly ignominious to a gallant and generous nation, yet they had the satisfaction of being the most favoured of the slaves of Europe. Under the banner of their victorious lord they enjoyed a material prosperity and a military glory which other nations certainly could not boast, since to them these owed their misfortunes and their chains, and which not only consoled them for their loss of liberty, but created in them an impure exultation. This was the only feeling, indeed, to which they were allowed to give utterance, as freedom of thought or speech was wholly extinguished amongst them. Not only political discussions were disallowed, but even disquisitions on questions of social policy, public ethics, or economic science. Under such fetters literature perished; and the age of Napoleon, unlike that of Augustus, is a barren waste in letters. The mind of the nation was crushed, and it was permitted to feed only on the crumbs of information vouchsafed in the Imperial bulletins, and on the redundancies of servile adulation. Wielding alone the potent engine of the press, Napoleon could at pleasure direct public feeling in any channel, and give to events such colouring as it suited him. Thus he was not content with forbidding his subjects to think, to write, to speak, but took upon himself the task of doing so for them. Even the professors of the Academy could not deliver lectures until they had been submitted to the approval of this censor, who often animadverted upon their aberrations in historical or even critical allusions. The contemplation of this unequalled despotism and mental slavery is rendered more mournful by the reflection, that, anomalous as it may appear, it was identified with the cause of liberty in Europe. Kings and princes had been taught by this plebeian conqueror how little they could rely on their armies to uphold their power; and in proportion as he humbled their pride, and heaped on them indignities, promoted the era of enfranchisement for communities. But the lesson was as yet incomplete, and his supremacy was still needed to insure the triumph of the democratic principle throughout the world; since both in the prostration of the princes and in their own misery the people saw they could depend on themselves only, and that their emancipation and regeneration must be their own work. Alas! the lesson was then, and has ever been, incomplete to teach the princes and

rulers of the earth wisdom; the lust of authority has still blinded them to the light of reason; and the question may still be at issue at the dawn of the twentieth century, when AT LAST the equitable balance shall be struck between the anarchical license of mobs and the iron tyranny of despots—when a beneficial, because stable, freedom may reign among mankind—when the passions of democracy and aristocracy shall be allayed and blended in a harmonious fusion!

CHAPTER XV.

COPENHAGEN—SPAIN AND PORTUGAL—ECKMÜHL AND WAGRAM—RUSSIA
—LEIPZIG—CHAMPAGNE—DOWNFALL OF NAPOLEON—JULY 1807 TO
APRIL 1814.

The treaty of Tilsit wrought as complete a change in Europe as the irruptions of the barbarians who overran and partitioned the provinces of the Roman Empire. Not merely were all the ancient landmarks obliterated, and the territorial configurations displaced, but the system on which it had hitherto reposed, and which all the wars of the last century had been waged to establish and maintain, was utterly abrogated. Instead of an adjusted balance among a few great powers, tending to secure the repose and independence of numerous minor states, every vestige of an equipoise was rudely destroyed, and two colossal empires arose, overshadowing and crushing the whole continent by their weight. The principles of public law fell into abeyance with the order of things in which they might have been enforced, and unblushing robbery of the weak by the strong became the rule of conduct for all able to realise it. The two despots of the east and the west had given to each other license to do what he pleased with the property of his neighbours; and England, on her part, was not backward to imitate their example. The tenor, if not the precise terms, of the secret agreement between Napoleon and Alexander, to coerce every power in Europe to embrace the continental system, and declare war against England, had sufficiently transpired to alarm the latter, and stimulate her to take precautions against so universal a confederacy. The smaller maritime powers had fleets which might be made subservient to effect her ruin, and particularly Denmark, who was well-disposed to revenge the aggression of 1801. The new Tory ministry—comprising Perceval, Hawkesbury, Castlereagh, and Canning—was animated with a determination to carry on the war with vigour, and in the contest

of life or death, which it had become, to oppose the redoubtable foe with his own weapon of unscrupulous violence. Accordingly, it took an immediate resolution to seize the Danish fleet lying in the harbour of Copenhagen, and destined for that purpose an expedition tardily prepared to co-operate with the Swedes in Pomerania. This expedition consisted of twenty-seven sail of the line, with numerous transports, and 20,000 land soldiers, assisted by heavy artillery. It reached the Sound in the beginning of August, and as the Prince Regent refused to deliver up his fleet upon the summons of Lord Cathcart, who commanded the British forces, the troops were disembarked, and Copenhagen abandoned to a merciless bombardment of three days, during which 1800 houses were destroyed, and 1500 of the inhabitants killed. To save their capital from total devastation, the Danes then capitulated, and surrendered their fleet, with all their naval stores and munitions of war, vehemently protesting to the last against the unjust and nefarious conduct of the British. The conquerors bore away their important capture, indifferent to the reproaches of which they were the objects, and carried into the ports of England the splendid acquisition of eighteen ships of the line and fifteen frigates, thus converting the strength of Denmark into a source of security instead of danger.

This audacious and unprecedented enterprise against a neutral power, without any previous declaration of war, excited a storm of indignation against England throughout Europe, and coupled with her breach of engagement towards Russia, gained for her denunciations of perfidy from every quarter of the globe. It was in vain she alleged, in her exculpation, the secret intentions of Russia and France: she was not at the time believed, and she long endured the opprobrium of having committed an outrage wholly unjustifiable. Yet there is little doubt she acted wisely upon the occasion, even in violating the canons of morality, if it were the fact that her implacable enemy had determined to make the Danes, willingly or otherwise, arm their fleet for the invasion of England. That he did so there is no reason to question, but every evidence to prove; and therefore the point is narrowed to the case already canvassed by jurisconsults of accredited authority, in which they agree that a belligerent may rightfully take possession of a neutral's means if he have reasonable ground to fear their being used to his prejudice, but only to keep in pledge, and to be restored when the apprehended hazard is passed. The crime of the British ministry, consequently, was not so much in seizing the Danish navy, as in retaining and utilising it after the seizure. At the same time, it may be said that the law of self-preservation is with nations, as well as individuals, paramount to all others; and against such an adversary as Napoleon many things might be allowable which, against one more under moral

restraint, would be justly condemned as unwarrantable. He himself was both disconcerted and infuriated by the measure; for it not only balked a favourite scheme, but evinced a spirit in the British government for which he had long ceased to give it any credit. It tended, however, to hasten his proceedings against the other countries he had marked out for subjugation; and whilst Alexander took Finland from his own brother-in-law, the king of Sweden, the last remaining ally of England in the north, he fulminated a decree against Portugal, her only other ally on the continent, and announced, in the arrogant phraseology he assumed on such occasions, that 'the House of Braganza had ceased to reign.'

To execute this imperious purpose, he despatched Junot with 30,000 men to Lisbon, which that general entered without resistance on the 30th November, and reduced the whole country under the French sway, the royal family retiring on board the Portuguese fleet, and under the protection of a British squadron to be conveyed to the Brazils. Simultaneously with this large addition to his empire, he promulgated decrees annexing to it in Italy the duchies of Parma and Placenza, the kingdom of Etruria, and the principal dominions of the Pope, whom he threatened to dethrone for refusing to shut the Roman harbours against the English. But his great design—one long meditated, and now matured—was the appropriation of Spain. That noble country—so rich in glorious reminiscences, the greatest of European monarchies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the discoverer and conqueror of the New World, and the inheritor of its teeming mines—had sunk into a state of degradation through long misgovernment, which almost took it from the category of nations. Lying at the back of France, and commanding a ready access to it through the gorges of the Pyrenees, the union of Spain with France in an intimate alliance has always been an object of solicitude with the rulers of the latter when seeking aggrandisement in Europe. Thus Louis XIV., Napoleon, and Louis-Philippe—the most ambitious monarchs who have occupied the throne of France—have pursued an identical policy with regard to their unfortunate neighbour, which has continually suffered to promote French interests. Louis XIV., in violation of a triply-solemn treaty, placed his grandson on the throne of Spain, and ever since that time, it has been in a constant state of decay. After the execution of Louis XVI., it entered, with more propriety than any other power, into the coalition against the French Revolution, but soon withdrew from it, defeated and disgraced. Subsequently it declared war against England, and formed a close alliance with the French Republic, enduring all the ills of war without obtaining any of the benefits secured by its ally. Since the accession of Napoleon to supreme power, he

had treated it in the overbearing manner he was wont to use towards dependent states, and it had submitted to his will with the tamest imbecility. In truth, its government was the most base and wretched conceivable. The actual reigning monarch was called Charles IV., but he was a mere cipher in the hands of his wife, who was herself under the influence of her paramour, Manuel Godoy, originally a private in the royal guard, but raised, by her favour, to the singular title of Prince of the Peace. This disreputable minion ruled the kingdom with an absolute sway; and by alternately cajoling and intimidating him, Napoleon contrived to maintain a paramount influence over the court. But previous to the battle of Jena, Godoy, sharing the prevalent belief in the superiority of the Prussian army, exhibited a disposition to throw off this yoke, and actually published a proclamation calling upon the Spanish people to rise *en masse*. After the ruin of Prussia, he sought to dissemble the object of this measure, and Napoleon, having the Polish campaign before him, feigned to be satisfied with the flimsy excuse, that the precaution was taken to guard against an invasion of the Moors. The Emperor even accepted an auxiliary army from him, which he planted in Hanover; but he became more sensible of his vulnerability to an attack from Spain, and formed an irrevocable resolution to absorb it in his empire. He discussed the project with Alexander at Tilsit, and obtained the autocrat's approval of it. He proposed to depose the Bourbon dynasty, and plant on the vassal throne one of his own brothers in its stead. The object was consistent with, and perhaps necessary to, his scheme of a universal dominion; but he little calculated on the resistance he was to encounter, or the storm he was preparing to bring on his head.

Considering the Spanish nation in the light of transferable property, Napoleon inferred that the simplest mode of accomplishing his purpose would be to extort an abdication from the weak-minded king, which circumstances favoured him in realising. The heir-apparent to the throne, Ferdinand, Prince of the Asturias, lived in avowed hostility to his parents and their unworthy favourite, by whom he was cruelly persecuted in return. To protect himself from their malice, he had solicited an alliance with Napoleon, by asking the hand of his niece in marriage, which honour the Emperor had declined, not wishing to be burdened with a prince whose patrimony he was intent to confiscate. But this family discord gave him secret satisfaction, and materially promoted his views. Refraining from taking part on either side, he kept both disposed to propitiate him, and in the meantime poured large bodies of troops into Spain, seized by treachery all the frontier fortresses, and even pushed Murat rapidly on Madrid. The Spanish people, believing themselves betrayed, rose in insur-

rection, deposed Charles and the obnoxious Godoy, and proclaimed Ferdinand king, under the title of Ferdinand VII. Upon this event Napoleon hastened to Bayonne, where he commenced a series of disgraceful practices, by which he lured the new monarch to put himself in his power. The old king protested against his forced abdication; and accompanied by the queen and Godoy, also repaired to Bayonne, denouncing Ferdinand as a traitor and a usurper. So enraged, indeed, were these unnatural parents against their son, that seeing little chance of recovering the crown for themselves, they agreed with alacrity to renounce it in favour of Napoleon. Ferdinand, however, obstinately refused to sign the act of renunciation, and only agreed to do so when positive threats were used against him both by Napoleon and by his father. His two younger brothers, Carlos and Antonio, whose removal from Madrid had occasioned a popular rising, suppressed by Murat with horrible slaughter, were likewise compelled to sign the renunciation; and the three princes were sent in captivity into the interior of France, where they remained in the country-mansion of Valençay during the continuance of Napoleon's reign. Charles and the old queen were assigned the palace of Compiègne for a residence, with an annual income of £40,000, and the favourite Godoy, to solace their retirement. Thus by a mixture of the foulest perfidy, artifice, and intimidation, did the French Emperor succeed in wresting the throne of Spain from the hands of its imbecile possessors, coercing the legitimate heirs to relinquish their rights, and obtaining the cession of it absolutely to himself, with power to confer it as he pleased on one of his brothers. He had at first designed to make Louis king of Spain, and annex Holland to France; but that prudent prince refused the tempting offer, and the crown of the Peninsula was accordingly given to Joseph, with a show of national concurrence by a junta of picked notables. Murat, Grand-Duke of Berg, was nominated by the dispenser of sceptres to fill the vacant throne of Naples, and at last received the long-coveted title of king. Joseph arrived at Bayonne on the 6th June 1808, and was there proclaimed, with great magnificence by his puissant brother, king of Spain and the Indies.

But it was only through an ocean of blood that he could wade to the capital of his new kingdom. Napoleon had too hastily calculated on the degeneracy of the Spanish people, who he never supposed would venture to resist his arms; and thus, in his inordinate ambition, became committed to a fatal contest, no longer against kings and aristocracies tyrannising over dependent and apathetic populations, but against a gallant nation fighting for its independence. Whilst humbling monarchs only, he was still expanding the principles of the Revolution, and performing acts agreeable to democracy, which could almost forgive his despotism

for the humiliations he heaped on the proud ones of the earth; but when he attempted to enslave a people against its wish, his violation of every cherished principle was too flagrant, and he aroused against him the execration of all mankind. The insurrection throughout every province of Spain was instantaneous and universal. With the exception of the higher grandees—who, through interested motives, generally adhered to Joseph—all classes of the community combined in a general confederacy against his usurpation. Priests, monks, soldiers, peasants, burghers, all responded to the cry of their common country, and flocked to defend it from its invaders. Never was so truly national and spontaneous a movement witnessed against a detested oppressor. It soon proved formidable to the French corps penetrating into the interior of the country; and although the patriots sustained a signal defeat from Bessieres at Rio Seco, which opened the road to Madrid, where Joseph arrived on the 20th July, they were successful in sundry other encounters, and particularly at Baylen, where they struck a blow which gave the first rude shock to Napoleon's supremacy. Here Dupont, the intrepid warrior who had battled so fiercely with the Russians, was surrounded by the undisciplined insurgents, and compelled to lay down his arms at the head of 20,000 men. This extraordinary event wrought a prodigious effect throughout Europe, and occasioned a delirium of excitement in England, whose government took immediate measures to support the patriots, by forwarding to Spain immense supplies of warlike stores and considerable subsidies of money. Joseph beat a precipitate retreat from Madrid, after an occupation of ten days, and retired to Burgos, under the protection of Bessieres and Savary. Castanos, the conqueror of Baylen, entered the capital in triumph with the Andalusian troops, and the enthusiasm of the Spaniards at their deliverance was boundless. The public joy was still further increased by intelligence of the expulsion of the French from Portugal by a British army under Sir Arthur Wellesley. This commander, who had already won laurels in India, and was destined to achieve a renown scarcely inferior to that of the great captain himself, had landed with 15,000 men in Portugal, defeated Junot at Vimiera on the 21st August, and would probably have destroyed him, but for the interference of his superior in command, Sir Harry Burrard. After his defeat, Junot had no alternative but to capitulate, and he obtained the most advantageous terms possible under the circumstances. By the Convention of Cintra, the English generalissimo, who had now become Sir Hew Dalrymple by a ludicrous fluctuation in the command, agreed that Junot should be allowed to retire from Portugal with all his troops, and be conveyed to France in British transports, without any reservation as to not serving again. Although more stringent terms might

probably have been insisted on, this Convention raised a most senseless clamour in England, and all the three generals were sent before a committee of inquiry. The judgment was favourable to them; but so jaundiced was the public mind, that they continued, nevertheless, under a shade of odium; and but for the accident of Wellesley having a brother in the ministry, it is probable he would not again have been intrusted with a command, which might have had momentous consequences on the issue of the struggle.

Napoleon now began to perceive into what a serious dilemma he had plunged himself. The lustre of his arms was sullied, and, yet more, the ineffable prestige of his invincibility was impaired. He felt deeply the significance of these disasters, and vented his wrath in unseemly execrations against Dupont and Junot, the former of whom, with his principal officers, he threw into prison. Sensible how much the stability of his sway depended on the influence of opinion, conscious, too, of the implacable hatred he had aroused against him among the German powers and populations, he grew unusually irritable and suspicious as to the manifestations of foreign cabinets. Prussia he yet held in his grasp, but he desired to withdraw from it 100,000 men of the Grand Army, to be used in Spain. The dispositions of Austria gave him uneasiness, for he knew the inveterate hostility with which she naturally regarded him, and he detected movements indicating secret preparations for war. But if Russia still adhered to her alliance with him, he felt satisfied that neither Austria nor Prussia would venture to molest him, and that if secure in her attachment, he might with safety direct the bulk of his forces against the patriots of the Peninsula. On this account, he redoubled his assiduities towards the Emperor Alexander, and invited him to hold another interview; which the young autocrat, flattered and seduced by such exclusive testimonies of deference on the part of the great man of the age, readily acceded to. It was appointed to take place at Erfurth, and thither both monarchs repaired with great pomp on the 27th September. In the intercourse between them that ensued, they evinced towards each other the utmost confidence and friendship. They passed most of each day together, and always dined in company, proceeding afterwards to the theatre, where they occupied the same box. All the talent of the French stage was assembled at this German town; and as the classic drama was most consonant to the exalted taste of Napoleon, the masterpieces of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire were successively represented. The scene on these occasions was most magnificent. Around the two emperors were clustered numerous kings and sovereign princes, members of the Confederation of the Rhine, besides marshals, ministers, and generals in almost countless multitude. Beautiful and richly-dressed females garnished the

ample circle, and lent to the brilliant uniforms of the men a more graceful elegance and dazzling diversity. The object of all attention and homage was the wondrous Napoleon, and rarely, indeed, has mortal appeared in the outward guise of such transcendent grandeur. Despite all their apparent cordiality, however, which was pushed to an almost exaggerated pitch,* at bottom the two emperors were doubtful of each other, and felt a presentiment that their union would come to a hostile termination. It suited the designs of both at the moment, since they had each schemes of conquest to accomplish, and they accordingly drew yet tighter the bands they had knit at Tilsit. Napoleon flattered himself he had gained a complete ascendancy over the mind of the czar, whereas on Alexander's inconstant and dissembling nature it was impossible to rivet a permanent impression. But for the time, they were perfectly agreed, and after a meeting of seventeen days, they parted on the 14th October, with evidences of the warmest amity, at the same spot at which they had met on the high-road between Erfurth and Weimar. Before separating, Napoleon had consented to relieve the king of Prussia from a portion of his pecuniary obligations, and to evacuate his dominions, with the exception of certain fortresses on the Oder and the Vistula. Whilst thus apparently conceding a favour, he in reality acquired the advantage of having at his disposition the veterans of the Grand Army, who, being no longer of use on the north of the Elbe, might with signal benefit be transferred to the new theatre of warfare on the south of the Pyrenees.†

Having thus secured himself, as he thought, on the side of Germany, Napoleon returned forthwith to Paris, and made immediate preparations for pouring into the devoted land of Spain an overwhelming force of 300,000 men. By a message to the Senate, he called out two levies of 80,000 men each, anticipating the conscriptions for 1809 and 1810—a drain upon the rising generation, which swept it almost bodily from the pursuits of industry. But the Senate sanctioned the decrees with even more than wonted adulation; and such was the military spirit among the population, that,

* On occasion, for instance, of the representation of *Œdippe*, when the line was repeated :

'*L'Amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux,*'

[The friendship of a great man is a boon of the gods],

Alexander turned to Napoleon and presented to him his hand.

† At the conferences of Erfurth, as at those of Tilsit, the feasibility of assailing the Indian empire of Great Britain by an expedition across Asia, was often the subject of discussion between the two emperors, but it was more perhaps as a curious question than a contemplated design. Still, it was within the scope of probability that such a project should be entertained, and even attempted: yet more strikingly illustrating the inestimable value of an insular position to England, that after conquering the whole continent of Europe, Napoleon could hope to smite so immediate a neighbour only at a distance of several thousand leagues, on the banks of the Indus and the Ganges, in the midst of another hemisphere!

amidst many heartrending episodes, the youths in general forsook their homes with joy, and tore themselves from their families with bright anticipations of the career of glory awaiting them. During the whole of October, the continual tread of soldiers was heard from the Vistula to the Pyrenees; the tide of invasion was rolled back through Germany, across the Rhine, over France into the mountains of Navarre and the plains of Catalonia. At the beginning of November, the Emperor repaired in person to the headquarters of the army, which he divided as usual into distinct corps, under the command of separate marshals. The undisciplined hosts of the Spaniards were no match for such a force directed by Napoleon in person; and even had they been so, the want of concert among their leaders, and the blind presumption they indulged from their prior successes, would have sufficed to paralyse their strength. They were divided into three armies under different commanders, the principal of whom were Romana, Blake, Castanos, and Palafox. These were so unprepared for the dangers accumulating around them, that they supposed they had only to advance to drive the French over the Pyrenees, and regarded with jealousy a British auxiliary army under Sir John Moore advancing to their aid. In this state of things the issue was neither doubtful nor protracted. Having a disposable force of 180,000 men concentrated at Vittoria, Napoleon fell upon them in succession, routed them in three decisive engagements at Espinosa, Burgos, and Tudela, pushed rapidly forward on Madrid, and reduced that capital to capitulate on the 3d December. Thence he distributed his troops in active pursuit of the broken insurgents, and made a combined effort to envelop Moore with his little army of 30,000 men. Unconscious of the disasters that had befallen their allies, the English had extended their advance almost into Leon, so that the bulk of the French were already on their rear. Happily, Moore received notice of his danger in time to retrograde into Galicia, his retreat on Portugal being already cut off by Ney; and followed by a preponderating force under Soult, he fell back with all speed on Corunna. Amidst the disorders of so hurried a retreat, Moore showed a bold front to the pursuing enemy, kept him in check by a strong rearguard, and after reaching Corunna, halted to fight him, in order to cover his embarkation. On the 16th January, accordingly, he engaged the French in front of Corunna, and in the thick of the battle, whilst heroically heading his troops, received a cannon ball in the breast, which mortally wounded him. Notwithstanding the loss of their general, the British succeeded in repulsing their assailants, who at nightfall fell back in confusion, and attempted no further molestation to the embarkation, which was safely effected in the course of the 17th, the following day. But half the British army had fallen or been taken, and great was the lamentation in England over this unexpected reverse, by which,

instead of Spain being wrested out of the grasp of Napoleon, it seemed irrevocably delivered into his hands.

In this emergency, the impatient hopes of Austria arrested the progress of the Emperor in his career of subjugation. Her exclusion from the conferences at Erfurth had caused her the deepest umbrage; and encouraged by the earlier aspect of the Spanish war, she had taken too fixed a resolution to take up arms to recede from it. Even a knowledge of the alliance between Alexander and Napoleon failed to deter her from the enterprise, and she even sought to gain the co-operation of the former in it, as well as that of the king of Prussia. But those two monarchs could not be induced to violate the pledges they had so recently given, and offered no encouragement to Austria beyond a secret assurance that they would at least take no part against her. By means of subsidies and supplies from England, she was enabled, with great despatch, to equip her armies for the field, and also arm immense levies of the *landwehr*, or militia: the national enthusiasm being roused to the highest pitch in favour of the war; for nowhere in Germany did greater hatred of the French exist. Her preparations were already so far matured in January 1809, that Napoleon was most reluctantly compelled to quit Spain, abandon his labours for the organisation of its government, and relinquish to his lieutenants, Soult and Ney, the task of completing its conquest. He was obliged, moreover, to withdraw a large portion of his veteran army from the Peninsula; and hence this promptitude on the part of Austria operated very decisive consequences in promoting the final catastrophe.* He prepared, however, to meet this new war with his usual promptitude, and manifested a more than wonted industry in forming his combinations. Taken by surprise, he was in no condition to assume the offensive, but he strove to gain time by prolonging negotiations. The Austrians themselves seemed almost afraid to strike the blow, even after unsheathing the sword; and they suffered February and March to elapse before they finally passed the Inn. The Archduke Charles commanded them, and they amounted to nearly 200,000 men. Pending Napoleon's arrival in person, Berthier, Prince of Neufchatel, had the direction of the French army, which was much inferior in number to the Austrian. This officer had, ever since the first Italian campaign, acted as Napoleon's chief of the staff; and by those disposed to depreciate the Emperor, he was represented as the real author of all his most brilliant conceptions. His conduct upon the present occasion, when intrusted with the supreme command, showed upon how

* Napoleon himself remarks that if the court of Vienna had allowed him to remain four months longer in Spain, he would have completely reduced the country, occupied Lisbon and Cadiz, and consolidated the government on conciliatory principles.—*Mem.* vol. vi. p. 89.

false a ground such a supposition rested. He made so faulty a distribution of his forces, that but for the incredible supineness of the Archduke, he must have been infallibly destroyed. Napoleon arrived at Donauwerth just in time to rescue the army; and having brought up his reinforcements from the Rhine, counted under his standard nearly 200,000 men, but not more than one-half of them were French—the rest being Germans of the Confederation of the Rhine. He instantly formed his plan for offensive operations against the Archduke. His entire forces being at last concentrated on the south of the Danube, his object was to strike in between the Austrian right and centre and their left, divide them, throw the former over the Danube at Ratisbon, the latter back upon the Inn at Landshut. By a series of manœuvres, unsurpassed for precision and foresight, he accomplished the whole of this design: in the combats of Abensberg and Landshut, fought on the 20th and 21st of April, he repulsed the left of the Austrians with enormous loss, and subsequently defeated the Archduke himself in a pitched battle at Eckmühl on the 22d of April. By these successes he had killed or taken of the enemy 30,000 men, and captured 100 pieces of cannon; the Archduke was driven out of the field into Bohemia, and separated from his left wing, which was lost up the Inn: no sufficient obstacle remained to impede the march of the victorious army to Vienna. Thus with that unexampled rapidity which marked his achievements, he could boast to his enraptured soldiers and subjects that in less than a fortnight from leaving Paris he had annihilated the Austrian army, and was again on his way to the capital of the Cæsars.*

He reached Vienna, accordingly, on the 10th of May, without any resistance being offered to his advance, except at Ebersberg on the Traun, where Hiller, with the left of the Austrians, made a stand, and sustained against Massena one of the most horrible conflicts recorded in history. The Archduke Maximilian held the capital, but after a day's bombardment, he retired from it, crossed to the north bank of the Danube, and burnt the great wooden bridge over it. In order to pass the river, therefore, Napoleon was obliged to construct a bridge of boats, which he connected with the island of Lobau, situated below Vienna, and separated from the left bank by an arm not more than 150 yards wide. This being completed by the 20th, the French troops began to defile through the island to the other side of the Danube, Napoleon risking so perilous an enterprise in the very presence of the Archduke Charles with 100,000 men. It was a temerity

* It appears from Las Cases's *Journal* that Napoleon deemed this defeat of the Archduke Charles one of the most remarkable he ever effected. 'On this day,' says the count, 'I heard the Emperor repeat what I had often heard him previously say, that the finest manœuvres of his life were those which preceded the battle of Eckmühl.'—*Journal*, vol. v. p. 169.

which the poorest general could not fail to take advantage of; consequently, when about 50,000 men, under Massena and Lannes, had passed, on the morning of the 21st, the Archduke moved down in imposing array from the heights of Bisamberg, which he occupied, and attacked the French with great impetuosity between the villages of Aspern and Essling. The two marshals opposed him with that unconquerable tenacity which characterised them; but owing to the bridge of boats over the larger arm of the Danube being swept away by a sudden flood of the river, few reinforcements could be despatched to them: and after maintaining a sanguinary struggle during two whole days, they were obliged to retire at night into the island of Lobau, where intrenchments protected them from the further assaults of the enemy. Lannes was mortally wounded, and expired that same night in presence of the Emperor. Thus the Austrians gained an important victory through the extreme audacity of Napoleon, whom the accident of a flood prevented from sufficiently reinforcing his lieutenants, whose prowess he recognised, nevertheless, by a touching tribute to the memory of the fallen warrior, and by conferring on the survivor the title of Prince of Essling. Not deterred, however, by so signal a discomfiture from prosecuting his design, he retained possession of Lobau, on which he erected immense fortifications, and there awaited the arrival of Prince Eugene from Italy, and of other reinforcements drawn from the Tyrol and the north of Germany. By the end of June, he concentrated in this island 150,000 infantry and 30,000 cavalry, with 750 pieces of cannon; and having completed all his preparations, he passed over bridges, suddenly thrown across the stream, this enormous force on the night of the 4th July, amidst a terrific tempest of rain and lightning. By this unparalleled operation, executed under his own immediate direction, Napoleon deceived his antagonist, who expected him to attempt the passage, as before, in front of Aspern, and turned him on the side of Hungary, compelling him thus to risk a decisive battle for the existence of the Austrian monarchy. But on the issue of the encounter he likewise hazarded his own imperial crown, for defeat would have been ruin to him; and with such a mighty stake at wager, the two combatants engaged on the 5th July in the tremendous conflict of Wagram. It raged during the two days of the 5th and 6th with ever-fluctuating success. Both armies fought with the courage partaking of desperation. On the left wing the Austrians were victorious; on the right they were repulsed; in the centre they drove back the French, who were sustained by the Imperial Guard, and regained their ground. At length Napoleon ordered a decisive charge by numerous columns, which the Archduke was unable to resist, and he retired from the field. The slaughter was as great as at Eylau, since 50,000 bodies were stretched on the field of combat, almost as

many being French as Austrians. It was little more than a drawn battle, but it had all the effect of a defeat to the Archduke, who retreated into Bohemia, and sued for an armistice, which, for sundry cogent reasons, Napoleon saw fit to grant, on condition of negotiations for peace being immediately opened.

The star of Napoleon then still shone in the ascendant. Seated in the palace of Maria-Theresa, as he had been three years before in that of Frederick, and was three years subsequently to be in that of Catherine—the three first robbers of Poland—he could dictate terms of peace to the conquered emperor, and overawe the whole continent, since universal success attended his arms. The Archduke John, who had been sent into Italy at the head of 50,000 men, at first had gained advantages over the Viceroy Eugene; but being compelled to retreat by the advance of Napoleon on Vienna, he suffered heavy losses in his retrograde movement, and eventually a severe defeat at Raab in Hungary, shortly after the battle of Essling. He was thus prevented from effecting an immediate junction with his brother Charles, and by his subsequent delay and disobedience of orders, lost the opportunity of taking part in the battle of Wagram, in which his presence would probably have been destructive to Napoleon. In the Tyrol, where a heroic contest against the French had been maintained by the brave peasants under Hofer, Spechbacher, and other leaders, the whole country was finally conquered, the Austrians expelled, and the patriot Hofer barbarously shot; in Westphalia, an insurrection against the government of Jerome was suppressed after some bloodshed; in Poland, the Archduke Ferdinand was, after reducing Warsaw, ultimately worsted by Poniatowski; and in Italy, the last potentate on the continent who ventured to disobey the mandates and defy the menaces of the Emperor—namely, Pope Pius VII.—was forcibly seized in his palace, dethroned, imprisoned, and Rome proclaimed the second city of the Empire. The pontiff essayed to use in his defence the old weapons of the church—the terrors of excommunication; but he found his spiritual thunders powerless against the temporal supremacy of his oppressor. Lastly, in Flanders the British were thwarted in an attempt to destroy the immense arsenal constructed by Napoleon at Antwerp. It was from the Scheldt that he intended to make his next great effort to obtain the command of the Channel, and his naval preparations in it had long excited the uneasiness of the British cabinet. An immense expedition was fitted out to accomplish the work of destruction, which, after many unhappy delays, set sail on the 28th July. The island of Walcheren and the port of Flushing were occupied; and as Antwerp was weakly guarded, it might readily have been taken; but the general commanding the expedition, Lord Chatham, was an indolent, stupid person, totally

unfit to direct the smallest serious operation of war. Accordingly, he allowed ample time to Bernadotte, who had been disgraced by Napoleon for his conduct at Wagram, and had been temporarily appointed commandant of the place, to prepare for its defence, and the British were obliged ignominiously to abandon the enterprise. When the choice of a commander is prompted only by court or government favour, or on account of rank, it is generally bad; and no history is so full of such lamentable appointments as the British, nor replete with so many warnings against them. In this respect both parties in the State, Whigs and Tories, have been equally to blame; and so all-pervading was the aristocratic spirit, that the evil practice was rarely made the subject of animadversion in parliament. In truth the parliamentary debates of this period give evidence of the meanest and most shortsighted views on the part of the opposition, which has incurred the contempt of posterity by the simply factious and obstructive course of its conduct. It must be confessed that the Tory ministry proved itself more alive to the exigencies of the struggle, and infinitely more capable than its opponents of conducting it to a successful termination.

It was a question with Napoleon whether it would not be advisable for him to dismember Hungary and Bohemia from the Austrian crown, and erect them into separate kingdoms, in favour of two of the archdukes; but upon reflection, perceiving the increasing probability of his rupture with Russia, he deemed it better to preserve its unity, and, if possible, purchase its amity in the impending war. He resolved, nevertheless, to impose upon it most serious sacrifices. In addition to a crushing war-contribution of £3,500,000 sterling, he took from it the greatest part of Galicia, which he annexed to the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw; Salzburg, the Hansruck, and Berchtolsgraden, which were ceded to Bavaria; Carniola, parts of Carinthia and Croatia, Istria and Trieste, which were added to the kingdom of Italy. Moreover, by a secret article, the Emperor of Austria stipulated not to keep on foot an army of above 150,000 men during the continuance of the war with England. Thus curtailed and humiliated, Austria presented the sad spectacle of a power—recently the most formidable, arrogant, and ambitious of the European monarchies—abruptly reduced, first through its lust of dominion, and eventually its impatience of subjection, to a condition almost of abject impotence, dependent even for its existence upon the will of a ruthless enemy. Such was the deplorable issue of her ill-judged pretension to regulate the internal government of France; such her doom for attempting to stifle the liberties of a people; such the retribution for her base cupidity, selfish rapacity, and insolent professions!

After blowing up the walls of Vienna, as a last memento of hi

desolating presence, the Emperor of the French retraced his steps up the valley of the Danube, paused for an instant at the capitals of his subject monarchs, and pursued his way to Paris amidst acclamations and homage such as have rarely been accorded to man in his highest exaltation. He had attained the summit of all earthly grandeur; nearly the whole civilised world trembled at his nod, not metaphorically, but actually. Kings knelt at his footstool, and ministered to his imperial state; yet he was not satisfied. He still repined that all this greatness hung by the slender thread of his own life, and, perchance, of his continued success in war. He felt the instability of his empire even amidst its colossal magnitude, and he vainly thought that if he could purge his dynasty of its upstart taint, and leave behind him an heir, not alone of his own glory, but of a historic pedigree, he would perpetuate it on the mighty throne he had reared. His intense selfishness and pride did not permit him to reflect that it is by conferring institutions upon nations which they may love and venerate, that founders of empires can alone hope to transmit them to a distant posterity. He imagined that if he built up his own greatness, and fenced it round by such guarantees as most impose on the vulgar senses of men, he would establish the fabric upon an immutable basis. So far, therefore, from seeking to enlarge the franchises, or exalt the character of the nation subjected to his rule, and win its eternal gratitude by some more substantial claim than a transitory renown, he deprived it of even the miserable vestige it still retained of a popular constitution by wholly abrogating the Tribunate, and so curtailing the functions of the Legislative Council as to render it a mere nullity. The Senate, which he used as the obedient instrument of his pleasure, was filled with men who owed to him both rank and fortune, and who were content to exchange their independence for a life of sloth and enjoyment: realising the picture of the degenerate bondsmen who, under the Cæsars, sat in the curule chairs of the ancient fathers. But it was upon the restoration of an aristocracy that he founded his chief hopes of securing the permanence of his throne, and he accordingly restored all the titles of honour known under the ancient régime, constituting the whole of the senators and councillors of state counts by right of office. ‘An aristocracy,’ he has himself said, ‘is the true, the only support of a monarchy; without it, the State is a vessel without a rudder—a balloon in the air.’* He thus formed around him an extensive

* He says likewise in his memoirs—‘The institution of a national nobility is not contrary to equality, and is necessary to the maintenance of social order.’—Vol. vi. p. 236. The first axiom he supports casuistically, by maintaining that his nobility was founded solely on services rendered to the State, and as all would aspire to render such services, so did the titles, conferred in respect of them, not militate against the principle of equality, nor even the hereditary right attached to them.

body of nobility, composed principally of men who had risen to notice as Revolutionists, mingled with a large proportion of the old noblesse, who either resumed their former titles, or accepted new ones from the Emperor. At the same time an extraordinary magnificence and ceremony was assumed in the imperial palace, which was crowded with an endless gradation of officials, all bedecked and bedizened in the liveries of vanity, moving in prescribed attitudes as gilded automata in halls, vestibules, antechambers, and saloons, bowing at a signal, kneeling at a beck, stiffened in an etiquette as elaborated as the artifice of a science. Such was the political extinction, the revival of social distinctions, and the barbaric pomp, into which the Revolution had subsided in the days of Napoleon's palmy ascension !

One object more attained, and then his felicity would be supreme. Josephine, his Empress, had borne two children to her first husband, but her union with him had proved sterile. The subject of a divorce from her on this account had been often canvassed even in the time of the Consulate, and his brothers especially had urged its expediency. But he was very fondly attached to Josephine, and he resisted the persuasion from time to time until he deemed the measure imperative on reasons of State policy. Alexander had let fall some words at Erfurth upon the propriety of his alliance with one of the reigning European houses, and was prepared to offer his own sister to form it. At that moment Napoleon did not encourage the idea, but it recurred to him forcibly since his last victories. The question was one simply of choice, since the hand of the great conqueror was too valuable a prize for any court to reject; and the option lay, in reality, between Austria and Russia. Secret negotiations were opened on the point both at Vienna and at St Petersburg; but whilst they were still pending with the Russian cabinet, Napoleon abruptly decided in favour of Austria, and thereby gave deep offence to the sensitive autocrat. A formal demand was made at Vienna, in the name of the French Emperor, for the hand of the Archduchess Maria Louisa, and a hearty response was given in the affirmative. The preliminaries were arranged with great celerity, and the marriage contract was framed in accordance with that between Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette. Meanwhile the divorce was effected from Josephine. Napoleon had refrained as long as possible from intimating his determination to her, but at length it became necessary to do so. Knowing the previous machinations against her, she had long foreboded the stroke, and the dread of it had imbittered her existence on the first throne of the world. The day on which the fatal communication was made, they dined together at Fontainebleau, and after the repast, being then alone, the Emperor took his wife by the hand and put it on his heart. 'Josephine,' he said, 'my good Josephine, you know how I have loved you; it

to you, to you alone, that I have owed the few moments of happiness I have known in the world. Josephine, my destiny is more powerful than my will; my dearest affections must yield to the interests of France.' 'I have expected this,' the Empress gasped. 'Enough: I understand and feel for you, but the blow is not the less terrible.' With these words she sank upon the ground in a swoon. Napoleon was greatly affected, and felt disposed to abandon the project altogether. But he had gone too far to recede, and he steeled his sensibility by the stern logic of necessity. Yet now emphatic a proof he gave at once of the strength of his feelings and of the insufficiency of mere prosperity and grandeur to produce the sweet balm of contentment, when he confessed that it was in his connubial intercourse only that he had ever enjoyed any happiness. For the purposes of his ambition he threw away that morsel of happiness, and lived bitterly to repent the act in days of penitence and sorrow.

The new Empress was young, and of pleasing expression, although not endowed with remarkable beauty; she was, moreover, affable and good-tempered, but totally deficient in character and mind. She was escorted from the frontier of Austria by Napoleon's eldest sister, the queen of Naples, and was received on her route with all the attention and respect he had expressly commanded should be shown to his high-born bride. 'She is a daughter of the Cæsars,' he said exultingly; 'never mind her defects.' He met her in person at Compiègne, and rather disconcerted her by the bluntness and warmth of his reception. As the marriage had been already celebrated by proxy, he insisted upon consummating it that same day, to which the inclination of the Empress was not opposed. Three days subsequently, on the 1st April 1810, the civil ceremony of marriage was performed with great pomp at St Cloud, and the day after, the religious benediction was given in the gorgeous saloon of the Musée Napoleon in the Tuileries. All the magnificence of the imperial court was displayed, to give effect to the auspicious scene. Four queens held the train of the Empress; kings and princes stood as satellites of the great lord; cardinals, prelates, generals, and dignitaries were ranged in groups, intermingled with the resplendent forms of female loveliness; the people outside swarmed in the gardens and public squares, rending the air with jubilations; the Revolution, it was said, is at last finished, now that its champion and representative has united himself in matrimony with the oldest monarchical house in Europe; the past and the present are for ever blended, and in the grateful fusion are merged all causes of future difference. Such the vain illusions that marked this wondrous phase in the stupendous drama.

The bright auguries to France and her Emperor with which these nuptials were preluded and attended, received a rude shock

ere yet in their aurora. An incident occurred which, from sinister associations, produced an effect quite incommensurate with its magnitude, but upon which all the annalists of the period have enlarged with minute diffusiveness, and which made a profound impression upon the mind of Napoleon himself, tinged as it was at times with a poetical superstition. Among the festivities held to celebrate the occasion, Prince Schwartzemberg, the Austrian ambassador, gave a ball, at which the Emperor and Empress were present, and during the progress of which a lamentable fire burst forth, the ambassador's sister-in-law perishing in the flames. The affinity of this disaster to the one that marked the union of Louis XVI. with Marie-Antoinette, when nearly 2000 people were crushed to death in the Champs Elysées, gave rise to presentiments of a similar calamitous issue, which in the end were singularly verified.* But at the moment, all things wore a smiling aspect. The sway of the puissant conqueror seemed consolidated upon an imperishable basis; and amid such boundless prosperity, the voice of dolorous vaticination was soon stifled. Yet in a quarter where no serious thought of danger had been entertained, the black speck was forming in the horizon. The vast forces of Napoleon had overrun, but had not conquered Spain. The heroic population of that country fought against his tyranny with a constancy and spirit that have immortalised it in the history of nations struggling for independence. The two sieges of Saragossa would have alone sufficed to illustrate the indomitable energy of a people, fallen indeed from the first rank among the sons of men, but yet endowed with masculine virtues, and fired with the ardour of a noble chivalry. In these conflicts women bore the brunt of battle by the side of men, and Augustina Zaragoza, 'the heroine of Saragossa,' has enrolled her name among those of her sex whose deeds have shed upon them the brightest lustre. The romantic glories of the Moorish contest were eclipsed in the enthusiastic gallantry of this resistance to the modern spoiler and ravisher, who had laid prostrate all the disciplined armies of Europe.

But, unaided by exterior help, Spain, despite the patriotism of her sons and daughters, must have sunk at last into the iron grasp of the despot who wielded the desolating strength of such countless hosts. Distracted and divided in her efforts, she could wage only a desultory warfare against her invaders, who were organised and directed by one will, and that of the mightiest.

* The unhappy prognostic was ever present to Napoleon, especially when disasters began to press upon him. Thus we read that the day after the battle of Dresden (1814), when in pursuit of the Austrian army, he was informed by a prisoner that it was reported Prince Schwartzemberg had been killed. The Emperor immediately said, 'He was a brave man; but there is this consolation for his death, that it is now evident the threatening omen of his fall pointed at him, and not at me.' Two hours after, it was known at head-quarters that it was Moreau, and not Prince Schwartzemberg, who had been killed the day before. —*Mem.* vol. vi. p. 254.

Subsequent to the great irruption of Napoleon, and Joseph's return to Madrid, the Central Junta, which had been formed at Aranjuez for the government of the country, had retired to Seville; but its authority was scarcely regarded by the different partisan chiefs, who still made head against the French in the various provinces unsubdued by them. The peculiar condition of Spain rendered co-operation among her patriotic defenders more than usually difficult. Like France before the Revolution, she was a mere assemblage of independent provinces, having no tie but a common king; and she possessed no institutions under which her people might have rallied. Hence arose disunion and discord, the sure attendants of heterogeneous outbreaks; and but for the extremely rugged and mountainous nature of the country, the separate bands of insurgents must have been easily cut off in detail. Moreover, the Junta was composed of men who had necessarily had no experience in the administration of affairs, and were almost incapacitated by the sudden acquisition of power itself from its due exercise. Thus they exhibited much stupid arrogance, obstinacy, and even corruption, showing themselves wholly incapable of conducting so arduous a struggle under such untoward circumstances. Nevertheless they presented something like a national body, a nucleus of cohesion, which, if it wielded little authority within the kingdom, at least served to represent it abroad: consequently it was with this Central Junta the British government treated. Having resolved, with fortitude and true wisdom which may shield them from other imputations, to prosecute the war in Spain, and assist the patriots even in their dire extremity, as the last surviving hope to paralyse the strength of the overstriding giant, the British ministers entered into a treaty, whereby they bound themselves to recognise no king of Spain but Ferdinand VII., and not to make peace unless with the concurrence of the Spanish nation. This might appear a rash and imprudent obligation; and so it was generally viewed by the world at large, particularly by the Whig opposition, which, to its eternal shame, loudly condemned it, and by the French, who derided the supposition of England presuming to meet France on a continental battle-field; but in the desperate emergency of the strife it was equally politic and magnanimous, sagacious and generous, and a glorious success has consecrated it in the eyes of posterity.

From the invariable calamity which had befallen the British armies during the present contest and the previous American war, it had grown to be the universal opinion that their quality was so much deteriorated from its ancient temper, that they could no longer be regarded as fit opponents of such stalwart warriors as the French. In this opinion the English themselves were disposed to concur, from the uniform failure of every con-

tinental expedition, and they generally joined in the condemnation of any renewed experiment. But in truth the ancient prowess of the Briton still remained to him; it was in the wretched direction of that prowess lay the cause of such constant degradation. The aristocratic spirit, paramount throughout the system, was inveterately so in the army, and commanders were selected for no qualification beyond that of family or parliamentary influence. The one chosen to conduct the enterprise for the enfranchisement of the Peninsula owed the preference to his being the son of an earl and the brother of a minister; himself doubtless a man of most eminent talents. Happily no choice could have been more fortunate. Lord Wellington, for such shortly became his appellation, combined all the rare qualities requisite to constitute a finished captain; particularly that extraordinary firmness of mind and tenacity of determination, in which he perhaps excelled the greater conqueror of the age, and which adapted him especially for the troubled field on which he was to act. Seldom, indeed, has any man entered on a contest so apparently hopeless, so full of perils and difficulties, as this to rescue turbulent, jealous, and almost inimical populations from the yoke of a despot who had 350,000 trained soldiers to maintain it, led by veteran marshals, the least of whom possessed a greater reputation than his own. Yet did Wellington embark with his tiny quota of 20,000 men to attempt the desperate enterprise, undeterred by the magnitude of chances against him, or, by what was less easy to despise, the evil croakings of hostile partisans, and the very general certainty of his assured discomfiture prevailing among his dejected countrymen.

On the very day of the great victory of Eckmühl—the identical 22d April 1809, which allured Napoleon to plunge headlong on the capital of Austria—the adversary whom he openly scoffed at as a contemptible ‘seapoy,’ and styled his soldiers ‘leopards,’ who would fly to hide themselves in the sea at his mere presence on the Pyrenees, landed with the British army at Lisbon. This event, which was regarded as wholly insignificant touching the issue or even course of events at the time, proved the main forerunner of the great catastrophe. The French were totally unprepared for such an antagonist as they had now on their hands. After chasing Moore out of Galicia, and reducing the whole of that province, Marshal Soult had entered Portugal and taken the rich emporium of Oporto by storm. In this city he was reposing, permitting to himself and his troops all manner of excesses, when he was surprised by Wellington, who effected the passage of the Douro with an audacity and celerity almost unexampled in war. Soult had scarcely time to save himself by a precipitate retreat, in which he was forced to abandon all

his artillery and ammunition stores, reaching Galicia at last in deplorable plight, and with the loss of one-fourth of his force. After this first brilliant success, which had a prodigious effect in stimulating the Spaniards to a fresh general insurrection, Wellington made dispositions for advancing into Andalusia, to form a junction with Cuesta, who was at the head of the only considerable Spanish army, amounting to nearly 40,000 fighting men, including cavalry. This junction was happily effected at Oropesa on the 20th July, and so alarmed the French for the safety of Madrid, that Joseph in person took the field with his guards, and the two corps of Victor and Sebastiani. Confiding in the superiority of his troops, the king rejected the advice of Marshal Jourdan, his major-general, who urged him to wait until the advance of Ney and Soult gave him a preponderating advantage, and resolved to attack the allied army without delay. This rash project he executed at Talavera on the 27th July, and sustained a memorable repulse, after a desperate action which continued until the evening of the 28th. The French then retired, leaving 8000 men dead and wounded on the field, with some prisoners and pieces of artillery in the hands of the allies. They were inferior in number to their united opponents; but as the Spanish, under the ignorant and disloyal Cuesta, took scarcely any part in the battle, the English in reality had to resist the assault of a much superior force to their own, and by the firmness of their conduct, established for themselves a reputation which had an important influence on the progress of the war, since the Spaniards, and especially the Portuguese, who allowed themselves to be commanded by British officers, were inspired henceforth with unbounded confidence when engaged in concert with the British. The victory, nevertheless, was perfectly barren of immediate results, as Wellington could not venture to follow it up, Soult, Ney, and Mortier threatening in overwhelming strength his communications with Portugal. He accordingly fell back with all despatch behind the Tagus, where, strange to say, he was not molested by the five marshals, who now concentrated their several corps, and presented an imposing mass of 100,000 men ready for active combat. On the contrary, they again separated, foregoing an opportunity of expelling the British from the Peninsula which was never regained, and withdrawing into the different provinces to wage an interminable strife with the insurgents, whom they repeatedly defeated whenever they encountered them in large bodies, but who maintained against them a guerilla warfare under numerous leaders, harassing them by incessant attacks, and exposing them to continual alarms and an incalculable loss, by the cutting off of detachments. Perceiving the incapacity of the Spaniards to assist in any great combinations, Wellington thought it prudent

to retire into Portugal, having, upon mature reflection, formed the opinion that, with that country as a base of operations, he could always renew his excursion into Spain when an opportunity offered under more cheering auspices.

Upon the return of Napoleon to Paris after the campaign of Wagram, and the subjugation of Austria, he turned his whole attention to the Peninsula, and determined to extirpate at once the insurgent patriots and their presumptuous auxiliary. He had never supposed the British government would make another attempt in Spain after the disaster of Corunna, and his rage against it was proportionably great. With regard to the Spaniards, he proposed to adopt a very summary process of proceeding. 'I will settle the government firmly,' he said; 'I will conciliate the nobles, and cut down the people with grape shot.' Such the atrocious language of this impious representative of a popular revolution! To accomplish his design, he directed a reinforcement of 120,000 men across the Pyrenees, all veterans drawn from the Grand Army, so swelling his forces in Spain, including reserves and garrisons, to a total of 360,000 combatants. He formed two great armies, each of 80,000 effective men, and gave the command of them to Soult and Massena—the one to reduce Andalusia, which the patriots held in great strength; the other to conquer Portugal, and drive the British into the sea. Fresh from the laurels of Essling, Massena arrived on the theatre of war in May 1810, and prepared forthwith to commence operations against Wellington. This commander was placed in a situation of unparalleled difficulty. Everything conspired to make him despair of further upholding the contest. By the Portuguese government he was assailed and perplexed: instead of receiving aid and encouragement from it, he was exposed to every species of annoyance from its rancour and imbecility. He was dependent almost solely for supplies from England, having to pay in money for such as he procured from the peasants, who brought them sparingly to his camp; whilst in England itself the clamour and despondency were so universal, that the ministers shrank from supporting him, and even counselled him to abandon the struggle. Then was displayed how the indomitable energy of one man may avail to save or overthrow empires, and fix the destinies of the world. Wellington resolved to stand his ground amid all the terrible embarrassments of his position, and against the overwhelming forces advancing under the redoubtable Prince of Essling to crush him. With 25,000 British, and 30,000 Portuguese in British pay, he had to withstand the shock of 80,000 French, led by a general who almost rivalled in fame that of Napoleon himself. Massena opened the campaign by the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo on the 1st June, which Wellington was under the painful necessity of

witnessing, without venturing, in the face of superior numbers, to attempt to relieve the place. Conscious that the loss of a battle would entail utter ruin, he resisted all persuasions, contemned all taunts and imputations, rather than incur the risk, and followed the cautious policy of retreating leisurely before a foe he could not hope to oppose in the open field. Once at Busaco, he turned upon his pursuer, and inflicted on him a severe check: but he continued his retrograde movement; and at length entered, on the 30th September, the famous lines of Torres Vedras. Here, with incomparable judgment and foresight, he had prepared the means of resistance by impregnable fortifications, before which the undaunted Massena himself recoiled with affright. Covering Lisbon in this admirable position, and drawing ample supplies from the sea, he paused and confronted his opponent with the most determined aspect. The French general perceived the impossibility of forcing him behind such a range of intrenchments, and after exhausting every manœuvre to draw him out of them, after eating up the last morsel of food that could be extracted from the country, he had no alternative but to retreat; and he commenced that disastrous operation on the 14th November. Having to fight his way through a hostile country, pursued by Wellington with a prudent vigour, he suffered immense losses, and revenged himself on the unfortunate inhabitants by the most horrible barbarities. This ultimate success on the part of Wellington, contrary to every anticipation of friend and foe, produced an incalculable effect throughout Europe, and for the first time gave the most serious uneasiness to Napoleon. But the efforts of his lieutenants elsewhere somewhat consoled him: they were successful in every part of Spain, and the patriots were driven to the last stronghold of Cadiz, in which the national assembly of the Cortes was assembled, and which was blockaded by Soult with a large force. During the succeeding year, the war lingered on the side of the British; for although the French shrank from again molesting them in Portugal, they were in no condition to afford any effectual assistance to the Spaniards, but obliged to content themselves with protecting Cadiz, and so securing that important inlet to the interior of Spain. This inactivity was occasioned by the domestic perplexities of the British government.

The mental alienation of George III. became confirmed at the end of 1810, and occasioned the accession of his eldest son to the exercise of the royal functions under the title of Prince Regent. This personage had long been connected with the leaders of the Whig party, and it was naturally expected he would immediately call them to his councils. From an affected deference to his father's inclinations, however, he did not do so, but continued the Percival ministry in office; nevertheless, from his supposed pre-

dilections, such was the abject state of public spirit, and the base subservience of public men, the parliamentary majority of the administration kept continually dwindling, until it was often left in absolute minorities. Under such circumstances, it could not venture to prosecute with vigour the war which its opponents were constantly decrying, and from which they would probably recede when in power; consequently it was suffered to languish, the grievous financial distress of the nation operating as an additional cause to paralyse exertions. This species of interregnum continued until the assassination of Percival in the lobby of the House of Commons in May 1812, when a negotiation was opened with Lords Grey and Grenville for the formation of a ministry, which proved abortive from the most contemptible intrigue known in history, and one which forms the deepest reproach to the credit of monarchical constitutional government. The Prince Regent, a man of very dissolute habits, but holding the highest notions of the regal dignity, refused to part with a favourite lord of the bedchamber—Lord Yarmouth, a person subsequently notorious under the name of Lord Hertford for the revolting profligacy of his life—and the Whig leaders insisting upon the point, the offended prince took the resolution of throwing himself into the arms of the Tories, who promised to be much more compliant courtiers, and who, under the sunshine of his favour, soon regained their parliamentary superiority. Lord Liverpool became prime minister, and Lord Castlereagh foreign secretary; the ministry being formed on ultra-bigoted principles as to civil and religious freedom, even excluding from it Lord Wellesley, who was favourable to the concession of Catholic emancipation. But a firm determination was taken to support Wellington with powerful reinforcements in Portugal, that he might push his operations into Spain; and thus this inconsiderable question touching the royal household of St James's, the petulant whim of an effeminate debauchee, exercised a considerable effect on the future progress of the war, and on the probable destinies of the European world: so contemptible a cause and personage may sometimes produce important consequences on the fortunes and liberties of nations!

The Peninsular war, however, could scarcely have proved so disastrous to the empire of Napoleon, if he had not abandoned himself at this period of his career to such incredible excesses of power, as to indicate his mind to be in a state of almost positive insanity. No checks or considerations henceforth restrained him in the gratification of his inordinate passions; and it is instructive that his own brothers, whom he had raised to thrones, were the first to suffer from his outrageous lust. All of these he successively despoiled. First Jerome, king of Westphalia, was compelled to relinquish Hanover and the Hanse Towns, to be incor-

porated in the French Empire; next Louis, king of Holland, was made to surrender his dominions on the left of the Rhine, and admit French garrisons into all his coast towns to enforce the continental blockade. This latter prince was upright and humane in his character, and was sincerely desirous of promoting the welfare of his new subjects, by whom he was in return appreciated and beloved; for which amiable intentions he drew on himself constant severe rebukes from Napoleon, who rudely taught him that his paramount obligations of duty were to *him* and the interests of his Gallic empire. The Dutch being essentially a commercial people, and their prosperity mainly dependent on a flourishing state of trade, they suffered greatly from the prohibition of British intercourse; accordingly Louis laboured to relax the rigour of the exclusion, whereby he incurred the unmitigated wrath of the Emperor, who reviled him as an *ideologist* (a term of reproach he applied to all who presumed to think differently from himself), and eventually resolved virtually to dethrone him. Occupying the city of Amsterdam with an army of 20,000 men, and taking military possession of it independently of the government, he reduced the king to the necessity of resigning a title which had become elusory, and he accordingly signed an act of abdication in favour of his son Louis Napoleon: but still fearing the further vengeance of his imperial kinsman, he fled by night from his palace, and took refuge in Bohemia, placing himself under the protection of Austria. Although deeply chagrined at this step of Louis, Napoleon took advantage of it to annex Holland directly to France, and render it an integral part of his overgrown realm. At the same time his brother Lucien added greatly to the vexation arising from this untoward event. Towards Lucien he had never displayed that affection which usually animated him towards his nearest relatives; for notwithstanding the essential service he had done him on the critical occasion of the 18th Brumaire, he disliked him on account of the affected sternness of his principles, and his proneness to obtrude criticisms on affairs of government. Consequently Lucien had been excluded from the succession to the throne of France, and driven to live in retirement at Rome; but that city having been seized by the Emperor, he again fell under his immediate authority. Unwilling to endure its exercise, since Napoleon insisted upon his divorcing his wife, to take another of princely birth, he adopted the resolution of retiring to America; but being captured on the way by a British cruiser, he was carried to England, and in that country remained until the conclusion of the war, living in elegant leisure, and devoting himself to literary pursuits. Thus was exhibited the extraordinary spectacle of the two brothers of the greatest potentate on earth flying into foreign countries to escape from the theatre of his grandeur, which was

to them a place of punishment and oppression. Napoleon keenly felt the obloquy and scandal of such a deplorable testimony to his revolting tyranny, and the recollection of it haunted him to his last days; nevertheless, it had no effect in inducing him to moderate his conduct; and venting his anger in vituperative explosions, he proceeded with enhanced activity to consummate the additional confiscations he meditated.

Setting at nought all the lessons of experience, which teach that the incorporation of alien races is rather a source of weakness than of strength to empires, he determined to absorb the northern provinces of Spain from Joseph, whom he had so newly appointed to its throne, and to wrest his territories from the Duke of Oldenburg, who was intimately connected by marriage with the imperial family of Russia. The first measure was never formally executed, although made the subject of negotiation; by the latter he provoked the remonstrances of his ally Alexander, who naturally resented the spoliation of a near and cherished kinsman. But in the accomplishment of his design of shutting the whole continent against the admission of British manufactures, which had become the engrossing object of all his policy, he sacrificed every other consideration, and defied without scruple the bitterest enmities of monarchs and populations. With regard to Spain, at the same time, if he did not actually dismember her by a decree of annexation, he in fact assumed and exercised a sovereign sway over the whole country. Never was so pure and unhappy a puppet set upon a throne as the ephemeral Joseph I. of Spain. The four great provinces of his kingdom were divided into so many military governments, at the head of each of which was a French marshal, who wielded within the limits of his jurisdiction all the functions of executive power: administered affairs, received the taxes, and levied contributions, treating the wretched inhabitants with such merciless cruelty and extortion, that they forsook their homes, and abandoned the tillage of the land, insomuch that, before the French evacuation, nearly all Spain was reduced to the state of a desert. These marshals corresponded directly with Napoleon, being independent both of each other and of Joseph, who lived at Madrid in wretched penury, and with the shadow of a court he had no funds to maintain. His situation, indeed, was so intolerable, that he insisted upon resigning the crown, and only consented to wear it upon the urgent intreaties and specious promises of Napoleon. It is probable that if the latter had entertained any doubts as to the complete subjugation of the Spaniards, or any real apprehensions of British intervention, he would not have made so impolitic a distribution of commands among his lieutenants, who, as was certain to be the case, soon grew jealous of each other, and often refused to co-operate in moments of emergency. Moreover, they

were separated by swarms of guerillas, who intercepted all the communications, and kept them so isolated, as to be often altogether ignorant of their respective intentions and situations. By his superlative pretension to keep all things under his own exclusive direction, and to prevent the smallest approach to rivalry with himself, Napoleon thus prepared the way for a series of almost unaccountable discomfitures, and which, indeed, little less than absolute infatuation could have entailed. So true is the recon-dite saying of the wise pagan, *Quem deus vult perdere, illum prius dementat*. It never was so strikingly exemplified as in the instance of this most extraordinary and superhuman of mortals!

At this eventful moment, which may be considered the culminating point of his prosperity and greatness, Napoleon gave unlimited scope to his arbitrary propensities not only against his own relations, who afforded him umbrage, or whose possessions he coveted, but against all who incurred his slightest displeasure. The unoffending queen of Etruria, whom he had himself invested with royalty, and solemnly promised to compensate for its loss, was not only deprived of her dominions, but placed under the strict surveillance of the police at Nice; where, attempting to make her escape, he had her seized and shut up in a convent at Rome, to be detained in close confinement. The imprisoned Pope, who still resisted his authority, he subjected to the grossest indignity; and to reduce the spirit of the pontiff, whom he detained at Grenoble, he put him and his establishment on the miserable allowance of two shillings a day! Cardinal Pacca, and other dignitaries whom he suspected of encouraging His Holiness in his contumacy, he consigned to the dungeons of Fenestrelles; a dreary fortress perched amid the desolate peaks of the Alps, in which a great number of ecclesiastics who had offended him were immured. In other State prisons throughout his vast empire, and particularly at Vincennes, where he had at one time no less than three cardinals, numerous victims of his jealousy or apprehension pined; for never were the *lettres de cachet* of the old Bourbons plied with such industry, even by Louis XIV., as arbitrary arrests by this offspring of the Revolution. It is worthy of remark, that by every successive government in France arising out of the Revolution, this power of arbitrary imprisonment had been retained and exercised, showing how little real freedom had existed during its progress. The political police was the great engine by which this oppressive system was carried out; and during the greater part of Napoleon's reign it was under the administration of Fouché, Duke of Otranto, who, nevertheless, was far from enjoying his unlimited confidence. Detecting him at last engaged in a very singular intrigue with the British government, to ascertain upon what terms it was disposed to make peace, he indignantly dismissed him, and sent him into a species of

honourable exile. Fouché was perhaps the most sagacious of all his ministers, since he condemned not only the aggressive policy of Napoleon, but also his excessive despotism, which he foreboded would one day prove ruinous to him. Talleyrand also, so celebrated for his diplomatic finesse, was displaced from the ministry of foreign affairs, and succeeded by Champagny, Duke of Cadore. Both of these ministers enjoyed a reputation for ability and influence which was disagreeable to him, for he could not endure to be thought under the least guidance, or that any one shared with him the supreme administration of affairs. He had now grown to that pitch of arrogance that he could not brook the slightest murmur of objection, or tolerate around him any but such as were content to listen, to applaud, and to obey.

No earthly boon that man could crave was denied by an all-disposing Providence to crown the happiness of this especial favourite of Heaven. The long-cherished prayer of his heart was at last granted; and on the 20th March 1811 the Empress Maria-Louisa gave birth to a son, who received in his cradle the title of King of Rome, as if none but monarchs could issue from the imperial loins. Extraordinary rejoicings took place to celebrate the happy event, which was held to consolidate for ever the empire he had founded. Assuredly no infant ever came into the world the heir of such mighty prospects, or was hailed by the acclamations of so many nations. Potentates hurried to offer their congratulations and their homage; fifty millions of people raised their voices and saluted him as their future sovereign. To Napoleon himself the birth of an heir gave boundless satisfaction, since it relieved him from the only apprehension which yet lingered in his mind to obscure the bright auguries of the future.

Yet was a storm brewing, even in this hour when the cup of felicity was full to overflowing, which already lowered gloomily on his house. Alexander of Russia resented so deeply the robbery of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Oldenburg, that he relaxed the rigours of the continental blockade against colonial produce and British manufactures, which incensed Napoleon in a remarkable degree. An angry correspondence commenced between the two courts, which continued during the greatest part of 1811, and during which period both parties made extensive preparations for war, since a contest was seen to be inevitable, though each was fettered by existing hostilities arising out of the unholy compact of Tilsit—Alexander with Turkey, Napoleon with Spain. Fortunately, the former was enabled to rid himself of his enemies on the Danube by the peace of Bucharest with the Ottoman Porte; the latter withdrew part of his forces out of the Peninsula, but was far from abandoning the intention of subjugating it. Meanwhile, such was the ascendancy

of the French Emperor, that he compelled both Austria and Prussia to join him in offensive and defensive leagues—the former stipulating to supply a contingent of 30,000 men, and the latter one of 20,000. In the treaty with Austria, Napoleon agreed to give her an indemnity for such of Galicia as she still retained, in case he afterwards required it to reconstruct the old kingdom of Poland in its integrity: a design suspected to be entertained by him in the troubled mind of the Czar, who dreaded, with reason, that when he remained his only rival on the continent, he would seek to expel him from all influence in Europe, by driving him behind the barriers which Peter the Great had overleapt when he first made Russia a European power. Napoleon made some efforts to allay Alexander's apprehensions on this point, but refused to come under an express pledge that the kingdom of Poland should never be re-established, although his ambassador at St Petersburg had concluded a convention to that effect, which he refused to ratify. This naturally increased Alexander's suspicions, and as the armaments went on on both sides, explanations were mutually demanded, which tended as usual to widen the breach; and in the spring of 1812, no hope remained of averting a rupture. England of course was busy to foment the quarrel, and eager to offer her assistance in subsidies to the wavering autocrat. He succeeded in gaining an ally, too, in a quarter where he might least expect to find one. Sweden, whom he had so shamefully defrauded of Finland, and who had recently, through a series of fortuitous events, chosen Marshal Bernadotte to be the successor to her crown, nevertheless receded from the alliance Napoleon had imposed on her, and joined in a common league with England and Russia. This defection seriously discomposed the French Emperor, who counted the new Crown-Prince as one of his vassals, and considered his allegiance as still due to him. But, as usual with him, he had provoked it by his own unscrupulous violence. After forcing Sweden, on pain of an invasion from Denmark, to declare war against England,* he

* The sort of language used by Napoleon towards other courts which hesitated for an instant in complying with his commands, may be judged by that he held to Sweden on this occasion. He said in a letter to Bernadotte, dated 11th November 1810, 'You tell me that you wish to remain at peace with France, but I say let me have proofs of this disposition. Foreign commerce is the present battle-horse of all nations. I can immediately cause you to be attacked by the Danes and Russians; and I will instantly do so, if in fifteen days you are not at war with England. I have been long enough the dupe of Sweden, as well as of Prussia; but the latter has at last learned, by the catastrophe of Holland, that it was necessary to take a decided line. I cannot reckon always on the alliance of Russia. I was attached to the king of Holland, but I nevertheless confiscated his dominions because he would not obey my will. I did the same with the Swiss. They hesitated about confiscating English goods; I marched my troops into their territory, and they soon obeyed. On the fifth day from this war must be declared, or my ambassador has orders to demand his passports. Open war, or a sincere alliance. These are my last words.' What an idea of his power, and of his own conception of it, does such language convey!

had, notwithstanding, overrun all Swedish Pomerania, seized the Swedish vessels in the port of Stralsund, and otherwise treated her with outrageous indignities. No country suffered more than Sweden from the cessation of all commercial activity, as in the one essential article of salt alone she was wholly dependent on England for a supply; and when, in addition, she was made to undergo wrongs and insults intolerable to a brave nation, Bernadotte forgot that he was a Frenchman, and embraced with ardour the true interests of the country which had adopted him for its future king.

Most gigantic were the preparations made by Napoleon for crushing the last foe who contested his supremacy on the continent, and for achieving his darling chimera of a universal dominion. It was the overflow of the west and south of Europe upon the extreme north, reversing the old tide of invasion, which had swept away the empire and civilisation of Rome. Now it was the disciplined hosts of three-fourths of Europe leaving genial climes and sunny lands to penetrate into the sterile plains and bleak regions of a semi-barbarous people, to impose upon them the common yoke which held in thralldom the chief races of the earth—the Frank, the Celt, the Goth, the Saxon, the Slavonian—all alike. The king of Naples, the viceroy of Italy, the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, the kings of Wurtemberg, Bavaria, Saxony, Prussia, Westphalia, Denmark, the emperor of Austria, all banded together in one enterprise under the leadership of the mighty Gaul, who flashed over their heads the fiery sword of revolution! The forces wielded by Napoleon almost exceed belief, and approach the lavish estimates given by the credulous father of history to the vast array of Xerxes on the glittering shores of the Bosphorus. By successive decrees of the Senate, levies had been made until the active army of France amounted to 850,000 men, of whom about 250,000 remained in Spain. But the ordinary conscription failing to supply the requisite numbers, from the almost total failure of a whole generation, consequent upon the exterminations of 1793 and 1794, the entire adult population was called to arms, divided into what were called the *ban*, the *second ban*, and the *arriere ban*, to serve only within the confines of the Empire. The first ban included all males between twenty and twenty-six; the second, those between twenty-six and forty; the third, those between forty and sixty. Thus the Emperor provided for the defence of his dominions during his absence in the distant latitudes of the north, and was able to pour like a deluge half a million of native Frenchmen across Germany into Poland, where the Army of Operations was to be concentrated. To preserve the communications, and keep in subjection the hostile populations in his rear, he could only muster 200,000 of these for active war; but of auxiliaries, Italians, Germans, Swiss,

and Poles, he had other 300,000 under his standard ready to penetrate into Russia. Altogether, therefore, he had under his command at this moment the astounding number of *one million two hundred thousand men*, independently of the bans of the Empire!—a force to marshal, feed, arm, dispose, and direct, which seems a task too stupendous for the human intellect. The Army of Operations was divided into thirteen corps, and had upwards of 1000 pieces of cannon. With this prodigious force he proposed to conquer the deserts of Scythia, disregarding the remonstrances of counsellors, who expatiated on the perils of so remote an enterprise, and the murmurs of his marshals, who were wearied of war, and longed to enjoy in peace the honours and wealth they had won. To all he replied that his destiny would have it so; in his position he could not stand still; he must be continually in action, to rivet his sway over men ever intent to surpass himself in achievements—ever rushing to gorge himself in blood, to preserve his empire from crumbling beneath him. What a situation! And how instructive the confession, that even this man, so potential in all resources and appliances, could not rely on military power alone to maintain a throne he had failed to fence round with beneficent institutions!

The Emperor left Paris to join his army in Poland on the 9th of May 1812. He was accompanied by the Empress as far as Dresden, in which city he had appointed to meet him all the sovereign princes who ranked as his allies in the war. Here, accordingly, the most brilliant assemblage of potentates, marshals, generals, ministers, took place known in ancient or modern history. The emperor and empress of Austria, the king of Prussia, and the other crowned heads of Germany, all appeared to swell the train of their puissant lord, at whose slightest frown they trembled in dismay. But Napoleon was gracious to his royal courtiers, and dispensed among them benignant smiles; for his proud heart was supremely gratified at this universal homage, and he was animated with the assured prognostics of success. No doubt, indeed, was felt by any that Russia must succumb in the coming contest; and therefore all anxiously sought to propitiate the favour of the conqueror, who would speedily have Europe at his absolute disposal. Hence he was the object of a flattery and incense such as mingled cupidity and fear could alone prompt. The Emperor Francis alone ventured to hint at a condition of his subservience, which he indicated might be ruffled by the abrupt reconstruction of Poland. Yet to enlist the zealous sympathies of the Poles in his cause, good policy enjoined Napoleon to give them an assurance of his positive intention in that respect; and his refusal to do so ultimately cost him dear. He held the Poles in great contempt, and it is very doubtful whether he would have ever bestowed on them a real national existence. The same

feeling had betrayed him into a yet more grievous error with regard to the Turks, whom his disgraceful perfidy had delivered over to the ambition of Russia, and who now turned a deaf ear to all his persuasions to continue the war with that power. But in the confidence of his superior might, he deemed aid from such sources of little value; and no presentiment of misfortune darkened the exuberance of his triumphant sojourn at Dresden. He delighted to see his youthful Empress receive the idolatry paid of yore to a classic goddess; he dressed her in a gorgeousness of unparalleled lustre, in the radiance of which all rival magnificence paled and was eclipsed; he made queens minister to her behests, and tend her as her handmaidens, whilst he himself kept kings waiting like menials in his antechamber. Truly he enjoyed the fruition of his majesty, and bent to the dust the necks of boasters in the antiquity of lineage, or the historic fame of titled aneestry.

Meanwhile Alexander viewed the approach of his colossal enemy with a trepidation he could not calm; and even at the eleventh hour, offered to purchase peace by conceding all Napoleon's demands, if he would withdraw his forces from Poland. But this condition the arrogant conqueror affected to consider in the light of an insolent pretension to dictate to him, and he spurned it with rudeness. From his great inferiority in strength, Alexander could not hope to carry on an offensive war, and was therefore reduced to await an attack within his own frontiers. As his troops had not yet returned from the Danube, he could not muster more than 250,000 soldiers to defend his dominions; and he therefore adopted, by the advice of his generalissimo, Barclay de Tolly, the plan of retiring before the adversary, avoiding any pitched battles, and laying waste the country behind him. This, although a painful, was undoubtedly the most prudent system he could pursue, as he thereby drew Napoleon farther and farther from his base of operations, and made it more difficult for him to keep up his communications, and procure supplies for his immense host. Poland itself was a poor country, and furnished few resources for the maintenance of a large army; therefore Napoleon had to rely almost entirely on the magazines he amassed, which, with his usual foresight and providence, were in prodigious abundance. Yet these were of difficult transport, and before he advanced far into the Russian deserts, could be no longer available. Hence the destruction of the means of subsistence, joined to the rigours of the climate, offered to the Russians the most feasible scheme of salvation. But it requires great fortitude, and an ardent patriotism on the part of the inhabitants, to execute such a purpose; and Alexander strove to stimulate the spirit of his subjects by the most touching appeals to their loyalty, to their love of country, to their faith in God and his Divine justice.

Happily he spoke not in vain to the simple yet energetic hearts of the Russian people, who, partaking more the Asiatic than the European character, regarded with superstitious veneration the person and authority of their emperor. They prepared to receive their invader with the sternest determination to oppose him, even by recourse to the most desperate expedients; and contemplated, without compunction, the wilful devastation of their fields, the demolition of their homes, the conflagration of their towns. Against such a resolute population, burning at once with patriotic and religious zeal, and supported by soldiers of brave and hardy temperament, did Napoleon now direct his steps, intent to realise his sanguine dreams of boundless conquest.

More than even with Cæsar was it the motto of Napoleon, 'To come, to see, and to conquer.' It was his object on this, as on other occasions, to push with all possible rapidity on one of the capitals of Russia, St Petersburg or Moscow, the possession of which he fondly thought would enable him to dictate his own terms of peace. The reduction of the capital of a country is no doubt a grievous blow to its safety, but, with the exception of France itself, it has never entailed the immediate and absolute submission of the whole territory. But in the full persuasion that if he reached Petersburg or Moscow the Emperor Alexander would at once succumb, he rushed heedlessly forward, eager to grasp the anticipated prize. He crossed the Niemen at four points on the 24th and 25th June, having previously addressed to his soldiers one of those animating proclamations in which he knew so well how to kindle their ardour and enthusiasm. Macdonald, on the extreme left, crossed at Tilsit with 30,000 men; the Emperor in person, with Murat, Ney, Davout, and Oudinot, commanding corps, Bessieres, Lefebvre, and Mortier, commanding the Imperial Guard, crossed at Kowno with 220,000 men; the Viceroy Eugene at Pily with 70,000; King Jerome at Grodno with 65,000; whilst Prince Schwartzenberg, with the Austrian contingent of 30,000, entered Volhynia across the Bug at the same time. The Russians were distributed in four armies: on their extreme right, confronting Macdonald, and covering Riga, was Count Essen with about 15,000 men; in the centre, at Wilna, stood Alexander and Barclay with 130,000; on the upper Niemen, Bagration with 50,000, of whom 12,000 were Cossacks of the Don, under their Hetman Platoff; in Volhynia, Tormasoff with about 30,000. The disparity of the forces, therefore, was enormous, and left to the Russians no alternative but to act strictly on the defensive. Yet they had the important counterpoise in their favour, that as they fell back, they were continually reinforced; whereas the French, on the contrary, every step they advanced, lost strength, and removed farther from their magazines. Napoleon's plan of pursuit was, by rapid marches, to divide the two

main armies of Barclay and Bagration from each other, and overwhelm them, in succession, by overpowering masses. But the timely retreat of the Russians disconcerted this favourite manœuvre; whilst he had not pushed forward even to Wilna, the capital of Lithuania, before the dreadful privations and sufferings of his soldiers compelled him to halt. This being a province of ancient Poland, the inhabitants received him with enthusiasm; but their joy was soon damped by his evasive replies to their demands for independence, and by the universal pillage to which they were subjected by his famished troops. Expert as the French soldiers were beyond those of any other nation in drawing supplies from conquered countries, this barren and impoverished region presented so few resources, that already the vast accumulation of his forces began to prove a most serious inconvenience to the invader. The roads from Kowno to Wilna were strewn with thousands of bodies and carcasses, which, being left to rot on the ground, soon polluted the air, and occasioned the outbreak of a pestilence. Before a single shot had been fired, 25,000 sick already crowded the hospitals. The excessive heat of the weather, combined with the dearth and bad quality of the water, added immeasurably to the hardships of the soldiers; and all the extraordinary exertions and foresight of the Emperor were vain to ameliorate them. Such were the discouraging circumstances under which the campaign, so momentous in its results, was commenced.

Yet it behoved Napoleon to advance with celerity, if he would strike a decisive blow upon the enemy, as was his wont, in the field; but he lingered at Wilna seventeen days, engaged in constructing a provisional government, negotiating with the Polish diet, and maturing arrangements for the progress of the army: a delay for which he has been severely censured, but which was probably not prolonged beyond what necessity required. Besides the oppressive magnitude of his forces, he had the disadvantage of co-operating armies being under the command of inexperienced generals—such as Jerome, king of Westphalia, who failed to press Bagration with sufficient energy, and was accordingly degraded from his rank, Davout being nominated in his stead. Thus the Russian armies were enabled to execute an orderly retreat, and ultimately to effect a junction at Smolensko, behind whose walls the generals determined to make a stand. Napoleon had crossed the Dwina, and traversed Witepsk in the wake of Barclay, being again obliged to halt in that town from the total want of the means of subsistence. Such was the deplorable condition to which many corps of the Grand Army were reduced, that their ranks were thinned by a fourth, and even a third of their numbers. A council of war was held, in which several of the generals strenuously advised a retrograde movement; but Napo-

leon was unshaken in his determination to continue the advance. For this he had sundry cogent reasons. To retreat was equivalent to a confession of failure, and to the disaster of a defeat; whilst by pushing forward, the Russians might be destroyed before they were largely reinforced by levies in the interior, and by the arrival of the armies hitherto detached in Moldavia and Finland. If time were allowed them, they would become superior in strength to the invaders, and then all chance of their subjugation would be at an end. Accordingly, he issued orders to march onward, and despite the difficulties of transit, reached Smolensko on the 16th August. During the night the Russian army evacuated the place, leaving for its defence a strong rearguard. On the following day the French assaulted the ramparts with great intrepidity, but after a sanguinary struggle, they were repulsed. In the dead of night, however, the inhabitants removed from the town, and it was set on fire in several places, in order to be wholly consumed. The French beheld with agony the flames of the conflagration as they shot into the air, and shuddered with apprehension at so terrible a proof of the determination which actuated their adversaries. On the morrow they passed through the ruined town, and found within it neither food nor shelter. With a feeling of melancholy awe they pursued their march, and were retrieved from their dejection only by gaining at length an opportunity to engage the enemy in the open field. At Valutina they caught Bagration in the act of executing a very dangerous flank movement, which might have caused the ruin of the Russian army. As it was, they inflicted on him a severe loss, but at an almost equal expense of life to themselves, for the Russians fought with a most desperate bravery. After this action, the question was again mooted whether or not a retreat was imperatively commanded. The situation of the army was calamitous in the extreme: after a campaign of six weeks, it mustered scarcely a half of its original effective force.

In this dismal emergency, Napoleon was still emphatic in his opinion of the expediency of advancing. He argued as follows:—‘The condition of the army,’ he said, ‘is frightful: I know it. At Wilna one-half were stragglers; now they amount to two-thirds. There is not a moment to lose: we must grasp at peace; and it can only be found at Moscow. Besides, the state of the army is such as to render a halt impossible: constant advance alone keeps it together: you may lead it forward, but you cannot arrest its movement. We have advanced too far to retreat. Peace is before us; we have only to march eight days to obtain it. So near our object, it is out of the question to hesitate. Let us advance to Moscow.’ Thus impelled, as it were, by an irresistible fate to ‘keep moving,’ he rushed madly on to his

doom. The Russians, on their part, had now resolved to change their tactics, and with their own invigorated force, to arrest the debilitated invaders. For this purpose Barclay was displaced for Kutusoff, who had the advantage of being a native Russian, and the glory of having brought the recent Turkish war to a profitable close; and a final stand was made at Borodino on the Moskowa, to cover Moscow. Here they were found by Napoleon on the afternoon of the 5th September strongly posted, and defended by formidable redoubts. He resolved immediately to attack them, and the night was passed by both armies in the full expectation of a bloody encounter the next day. In all probability it was to decide the fate of the world for many a day to come, and on each side a feeling of deep anxiety prevailed. The Russians fought to save their ancient capital from the spoiler, the city which they venerated as sacred, and to rid their country of a devastating foe, who had come from the ends of the earth to enslave them: the French fought to gain a universal dominion, to uphold their reputation of invincibility, to avert an ignominious retreat, to achieve safety, abundance, and renown in their enemy's famed metropolis. The most animating motives stirred the respective combatants; and their leaders sought to inspire them with yet greater fervour by exciting stimulants. Before dawn Napoleon issued from his tent, and traversed the lines amid the enthusiastic shouts of his soldiers. As the sun arose from a dim aurora, and shone brilliantly on the horizon, he exclaimed, 'Behold, it is the sun of Austerlitz!' Immediately the words flew through the ranks, and on all sides arose the exulting cry, 'Behold, it is the sun of Austerlitz!' In front of the Russian army appeared venerable ecclesiastics, bearing aloft holy effigies of saints, before which the soldiers knelt, whilst the priests pronounced a blessing over their bowed heads. An exhortation was then addressed to them, in which the French were represented as the enemies alike of God and man, the impious violators of altars, the defilers of sanctuaries, the barbarian desolators of their country. Thus urged to all the efforts of which men are capable, the belligerents flew with maddened rage upon each other. Their numbers were nearly equal, being about 130,000 on either side, and never was a battle more heroically contested. Ney was the great hero of the day, and earned for himself his glorious title of Prince de la Moskowa. Among the Russians Bagration most distinguished himself, and fell mortally wounded in the thick of the fight. But at length the Gaul overmastered the Muscovite; and at the close of day the Russians were driven from their position. This was the only advantage, however, gained by the French, since they moved back into a second line, from which the victors were too exhausted to dislodge them. An appalling carnage marked this terrible shock

of nations. As at Eylau, nearly 50,000 killed and wounded fell on each side; but the loss of the French was comparatively the greatest, as they had no means of tending their wounded, who perished miserably for lack of the commonest necessities. Napoleon is described to have evinced great physical languor on this important occasion, and to have kept around him, with unwise caution, 20,000 of his guard, the very flower of the army, who, by a vigorous charge, might have won a decisive victory. His reluctance to risk his guard was perfectly natural. It constituted his only reserve in case of a disaster, and he feared, with reason, that he might have yet to fight another battle before reaching Moscow. This necessity, however, he was saved, by the timidity of Kutusoff, who, after his enormous loss, and without knowing the impoverished condition of the French army, judged the hazard of another encounter too perilous, and retreated on Moscow. To the consternation of its inhabitants he abandoned its further defence, and amidst an indescribable grief, traversed its forlorn streets on the morning of the 14th. He was closely followed by the eager French, who, when they came in sight of the gilded cupolas of the innumerable cathedrals and convents, the great tower of Ivan, rent the air with shouts of joy, clapping their hands, and crying, 'Moscow! Moscow!' Napoleon himself gazed on the wondrous scene with deep emotion. 'Behold at last that celebrated city!' he said; and a moment afterwards added, 'It was full time.' That same evening he made his entry, and consummated the crowning glory of his life by seating himself in the ancient palace of the czars, the Oriental structure of the Kremlin, the object of adoration to the credulous Muscovite as the temple of Mecca to the devout Moslem; for therein the patron saint of Russia, the godlike Michael, once displayed his miraculous form, and waved his flaming sword.*

But to his unutterable amazement he found the splendid prize a silent desert: Moscow had been forsaken by its inhabitants! With a rare fortitude, the whole population, with the exception of a few slaves and malefactors, had left the city, carrying away everything portable, and destroying the stores of provisions. Instead of finding all the abundance and enjoyments they had anticipated, the French soldiers roamed through empty streets, and sought in vain to alleviate the pangs of hunger by rifling uninhabited houses. The Emperor had hoped to enjoy the gratifying spectacle of the authorities appearing before him to

* The Kremlin is an intramural quarter of Moscow, which contains, besides the imperial palace, a great number of edifices, chiefly of a religious character, which are regarded with a superstitious reverence, on account of supernatural manifestations believed to be connected with them. When any one enters its avenues, he utters prayers and makes genuflections precisely after the manner of the Mussulmans when they approach the Kaaba at Mecca, or the tomb of Mohammed at Medina.

tender their submission, but not a single Russian presented himself to the conqueror. On the contrary, he himself despatched an overture to Alexander for an accommodation, which he never doubted, from his previous estimate of that monarch's character, he would eagerly embrace. In this expectation he was woefully deceived, since Alexander proclaimed his heroic determination not to make peace as long as a single Frenchman remained on the soil of Russia, and called upon all his subjects by an energetic appeal to rally in defence of their country. The French, therefore, had gained little by the conquest of Moscow; and even that was soon lost to them. On the very evening of their entry several fires broke out in different parts of the city, which were with difficulty extinguished; but on the two following nights, the flames burst forth in so many places at once, that from the scarcity of water and the absence of fire-engines, it became impossible to subdue them. Fanned by a tempestuous wind, they speedily spread, until the entire city was wrapped in one vast conflagration. Then ensued a scene so truly awful that no words can portray it. From street to street the fire raged, and chased before its destroying progress the appalled soldiers. The flying embers alighted on the buildings of the Kremlin, and warned the Emperor to retire. Issuing forth at the head of his staff, he made his way through the columns of flame at the risk of his life, blinded by the glare, and stifled by the heat. He proceeded to a country residence at a short distance, whence he could behold the burning city. In four days Moscow was in ashes, and with it were buried the last hopes of the French army. The destruction of their revered capital roused the Russians to the last pitch of frenzy, and they vowed with deep execrations to visit it on their ruthless foe. Yet not to him was the dire catastrophe owing, although then, and long after, attributed to his barbarian fury. It was the work of the Russians themselves, deliberately planned by the governor of Moscow, Count Rostopchin, who took upon himself, with admirable hardihood, the terrible responsibility, and for which he was subsequently exiled by his master. There is little doubt it was an unnecessary sacrifice, although an act in itself of sublime heroism. Indeed it may be questioned whether it was not positively injurious. The retreat of the French was, under all circumstances, imperative, and the burning of Moscow might have induced them to hasten it, whereby it would have been rendered less disastrous; whereas the longer they delayed it, both from the measures taken to harass and intercept them, and from the effects of the climate, the more certain became their utter ruin.

The situation of Napoleon was, in truth, most critical and embarrassing. He was aware that if Alexander withstood his intimidation, he must perforce retreat; but he could not bring

himself to believe that he would be driven to so fearful an alternative. Thus he lingered still at Moscow, having, after the extinction of the fire, returned to the Kremlin, which had escaped the devastation. Receiving no answer to his first overture, he despatched his aid-de-camp Lauriston with a second, addressed personally to Alexander; but this special messenger was not permitted by Kutusoff to go beyond the Russian head-quarters. The communication, however, was forwarded to the emperor at St Petersburg, that wily old chief expressing his own conviction it would be cordially responded to, although he knew directly the reverse; but his object was gained by Napoleon being tempted to prolong his stay. The vanity of Murat, moreover, who was stationed with the vanguard in front of the Russian camp, he worked upon to strengthen the delusion, causing his soldiers to salute and cheer him whenever he showed himself with his glittering array in front of the lines; which so intoxicated that vainglorious and chivalric personage, that he allowed himself seriously to entertain the idea of becoming king of the Cossacks. But after the lapse of a month, and no envoy appearing from Alexander, the painful truth became too evident, and the fatal retreat could be no longer postponed. The wild project of pushing on to St Petersburg was debated, but only to be instantly abandoned as chimerical: the notion of penetrating into the south of Russia, where ample supplies of provisions might be obtained, was also discussed; but that was even more desperate than the other, since it involved a complete relinquishment of the communication with Poland. But as the direct line to Smolensko lay through a country utterly wasted, Napoleon resolved to proceed by the route of Kalouga, which, although longer, had the advantage of offering facilities to subsist the army. During the occupation of Moscow, its condition had been little ameliorated; plenty of plunder had been gathered from the ruins, but a dreadful scarcity of provisions had existed—horses, dogs, and cats having formed the principal articles of food. From the disorder of the pillage, and the extremities of want, the troops had become terribly disorganised, and could with difficulty be retained in a state of discipline. They were still 100,000 in number, from the arrival of reinforcements since the battle of Borodino, and there were at least 40,000 stragglers and camp-followers besides. Altogether, they formed a vast multitude, covering the level plain in heterogeneous confusion, accompanied by an immense train of artillery dragged painfully along by jaded horses, and long strings of wagons conveying the spoils of Russia. Thus encumbered, the march was necessarily slow and the most grotesque imaginable, since the soldiers were dressed in every variety of costume; their original uniforms being generally worn out and replaced by the Oriental appur-

tenances of shawls, pelisses, and other finery, presenting a scene of blended richness and squalor, of order and riot, of regularity and tumultuousness, the most extraordinary ever witnessed among men.

It was on the 19th of October that Napoleon finally quitted the Kremlin, to commence that retreat which is the most famous in the records of the world. The extent of the misfortune before his eyes was sufficiently great to depress the strongest mind, but the recent intelligence from Spain added immeasurably to its gravity. The field of Salamanca had been won by Wellington, and the city of Madrid entered by the British troops: events well calculated to fill Napoleon's mind with the most sinister forebodings. But he maintained an equanimity and firmness under this first blighting stroke of fortune, which exhibited him equally fitted to contend against calamity as to derive the ultimate consequences from success. He issued his orders with all his wonted coolness and precision, completed his dispositions with the same thoughtful sagacity as ever. Kutusoff had conjectured he would seek to retire on Kalouga, and had therefore some time previously occupied the principal road leading to it; but Napoleon contrived to elude his vigilance, and reached Malo-Jaroslawitz on another road, by which he was enabled to turn the Russian position. A furious conflict ensued in the streets of this small town, the possession of which was of the last importance to both armies: to the French, as the avenue for gaining the Kalouga route; to the Russian, as the means of driving the enemy back on the wasted route by Mojaisk and Wiasma. After being taken and retaken no less than seven times, it finally remained with the French, who were commanded by the Viceroy Eugene on the occasion, about 5000 men being slain on each side; but after all, this dreadful slaughter was unavailing. During the struggle, Kutusoff had time to take up a new position in the rear of Malo-Jaroslawitz, which, upon being reconnoitred, was reported to Napoleon to be unassailable. He proceeded in person to judge the accuracy of this report, and his escort being suddenly attacked by a body of Cossacks, he only escaped capture by their ignorance of the prize within their grasp. Routing the French light cavalry, they carried off several guns before the eyes of the Emperor, who returned in melancholy mood to his headquarters, which consisted of a wretched hut with a single room. Herein he deliberated with his principal lieutenants; and as the necessity of relinquishing the Kalouga route forced itself on his mind, he evinced great agitation; his marshals gazed on each other with speechless agony, for they also knew too well to what a horrible alternative they were reduced. Contemplating a large map of the country for some time in silence, the Emperor abruptly broke up the assembly, without declaring his resolution; but no other plan of escape was feasible, and orders were

immediately afterwards issued for the conduct of the retreat on Mojaïsk.

These orders threw the whole army into the deepest consternation, for the soldiers remembered but too distinctly the horrors of the advance, to regard the retreat on the same route with other feelings than those of dismay. From this moment it was a real flight, prosecuted under the most harrowing circumstances. Kutusoff, it is true, failed to direct such a general attack as might have scattered and destroyed the host, believing its ruin to be certain, from the approach of winter; consequently, he contented himself with keeping the Cossacks on the rear, and clouds of light troops on the flanks, who made captures of men, artillery, and wagons at every step. On the 2d November Napoleon passed through Wiasma; but Davout, with the rearguard, received so severe an assault from Milaradowich before reaching the same place, that he lost 6000 of his men, and was obliged to be replaced by Ney, who henceforth commanded the rearguard of this retreat, and by his wonderful fortitude and intrepidity, won for himself an everlasting renown. Already nearly 40,000 men had succumbed from fatigue, hunger, or the sword of the enemy, and the number increased in a greater ratio when the formidable frost set in which is the invariable accompaniment of a Russian winter. The first decided indication of severe cold took place on the evening of the 5th November, from which time it grew in intensity, and aggravated beyond expression the woes of the wretched fugitives. No fate more truly dismal ever befell a retiring army. Without food or shelter, in a temperature several degrees below the freezing-point, and incessantly attacked by remorseless pursuers, the soldiers and camp-followers perished in thousands; and by the 13th, when Smolensko was reached, more than one-half of those who had left Moscow were missing. At the ruins of this town some magazines had been formed, which afforded a momentary succour; and Napoleon halted there five days, to collect the straggling corps of his army. But if he had ever indulged the hope of being able to maintain himself on the Dnieper, the intelligence he received dispelled the vain illusion, and made him hurry towards the Dwina with all the speed he could give his flight. Two powerful Russian armies were rapidly approaching, to cut him off from that river, and encompass him in such a manner as to insure his capture. These were the armies from Moldavia and Finland: the latter under the command of General Wittgenstein; the former counted 60,000 brave combatants, and was commanded, most fortunately for Napoleon, by a *sailor*, one Admiral Tchichagoff, who for some unknown reason had been selected to conduct its important operations. He was posted on the Beresina, and had seized Borissow, where the only bridge existed across the river. On the approach of the French he destroyed the bridge, and the difficult task re-

mained to Napoleon to effect a passage of the river with his disorganised and demoralised troops, in the presence of a superior force in perfect equipment and discipline. In this perilous emergency he displayed all the address and activity which had marked his famous passage of the Po in 1796.

Starting in person from Smolensko on the 14th, he pushed rapidly through Krasnoi, followed at intervals by Eugene, Davout, and Ney. He himself passed in safety, toiling through the snow on foot, for scarcely a horse remained except to draw the artillery; but Kutusoff, who had kept on a parallel line with the French during their whole retreat, fell with all his forces on Davout and Ney at Krasnoi, and executed upon them a prodigious slaughter, taking nearly all their guns and 10,000 prisoners. Nothing but the indomitable bearing of Ney saved the entire army from destruction: out of 40,000 men, with which his corps had entered on the campaign, he had only 1500 left. As Napoleon drew near the Beresina, however, he encountered the corps of Victor and Oudinot, which had fallen back before Wittgenstein from Kolotsk, and thus obtained a timely reinforcement of 30,000 men comparatively fresh and efficient. With these he marched straight on Borissow, hoping to cut his way through Tchichagoff before his junction with Wittgenstein and Kutusoff. By a skilful feint, he deceived the admiral as to the point where he intended to pass the river; and succeeded, by almost incredible exertions, in throwing over two bridges above Borissow, whilst his antagonist was concentrated to oppose him below that town. He thus crossed with his vanguard on the 26th, leaving Victor to follow with the bulk of the army on the next day. But on the 27th, Wittgenstein cut off Victor's rearguard under Partonneaux, who was compelled to surrender at the head of 7000 men, and then furiously assailed Victor himself, bringing his batteries to bear on the bridges across which the dense columns were pressing. Most terrible then became the scene; awful above all the reminiscence of that fatal passage. Victor fought with a lion's courage to repel the raging Muscovites, and kept them still at bay, whilst the crowd of fugitives struggled tumultuously over the narrow avenues. Murderously fell the thick storm of grape and balls; the savage Diebitch thundered upon the desolate multitude with continuous aim. Night came, and yet the firing ceased not: amidst the darkness the main bridge snapped asunder, and so impetuous was the rush, that hundreds were hurled precipitately into the water before the movement was arrested. Then arose the cry of wo, the shriek of desolation! Victor, with his surviving band, charged desperately through the fugitive mass over the remaining bridge, and having forced his way, set it on fire, to prevent pursuit. The flames burst forth whilst yet the bridge was choked with people, who had simply the dread alternative of fire or water to perish

in. Many attempted to stagger through the flames; more plunged with howls into the roaring river. Those left behind raised piteous lamentations, and ran along the bank of the river with outstretched arms, calling upon their retreating countrymen not to abandon them. But vain were their invocations: selfishness stands forth in hideous prominence when disasters fall on accumulated bodies: they were left to their miserable fate, and died in the waters or on the frozen strand. Twelve thousand corpses were counted when the returning spring dissolved the icy crust of winter, strewing the shores of ill-famed Beresina. Sixteen thousand captives and thirty pieces of artillery rewarded the unsparing efforts of the revengeful Wittgenstein, who inflicted this tremendous blow on the invaders of his country.

The passage of the Beresina completed the ruin of the French army. The personal safety of the Emperor was now the chief object of solicitude. The surviving officers formed themselves into a company, called the 'Sacred Squadron,' for his protection; in the midst of whom he walked laboriously forward, staff in hand, and clad in a large cloak thickly lined with fur. At Smorgoni he resolved to leave the army, to which he could no longer be of any benefit, and proceed with all despatch to Paris, where his presence was most essential. He confided the command to Murat; and after delivering an address to his marshals, in which he attributed the calamities of the campaign to his brother Jerome, to Junot, to British gold, to the frost, but not at all to the Russians, who, he averred, had nothing to do with them, he set out in a sledge with three aid-de-camps. His withdrawal was the signal for the absolute dissolution of what yet remained of organised troops; all subordination ceased, and the pursuing Cossacks slaughtered and captured almost at pleasure. The heroic Ney alone held firm, and still covered in some measure the retreat; but at Smorgoni, Medniki, and Wilna, thousands were cut down; and at the latter place all the remaining baggage and artillery of the French fell into the hands of their enemies. At length, on the 12th of December, Kowno was reached, and this horrible retreat brought to a close. Ney marched across the Niemen with the sad remnants of that Grand Army which, five months before, had entered so triumphantly on the campaign: of the 400,000 men whom it contained, counting the reinforcements which had subsequently passed into Russia, not 20,000 returned into Poland, and of these 3000, at the utmost, had seen Moscow! So utter was the ruin of that splendid host, unparalleled in the annals of warfare for its discipline, its equipment, and its magnitude.*

* At Gumbinnen, after crossing the Niemen, Ney found General Dumas, so well known for his military memoirs, who had arrived in a sickly state at that place. He had established himself in the house of a physician, into which a man entered, wrapped up in a large cloak, with a long beard, and his face blackened

The result of the Russian campaign shook to its foundation the Empire of Napoleon. Up rose with wild enthusiasm the whole population of oppressed Germany, burning to avenge the wrongs so long and heavily endured. But as yet the German monarchs durst not respond to the patriotic ardour of their subjects. The king of Prussia particularly, ever timid and vacillating, still resisted the exhortations of his own counsellors and the instances of the Russian emperor: he adhered to his old conqueror, and offered to assist him with increased forces, if he would give him pecuniary relief and restore him some of his lost provinces. But Napoleon doubted his sincerity, and repudiated his propositions with obstinate pride, scorning to make concessions to one whom he had fully intended to dethrone if he had been successful in Russia; and the Russians continuing to drive the French before them, now commanded by Eugene, since Murat had shamefully forsaken the army, and betaken himself to Naples, Frederick-William yielded to the imperative necessities of his position, and formed at Kalitch, on the 1st March 1813, a treaty of alliance with Alexander, by which the two monarchs agreed to use their united strength to achieve the emancipation of Europe from the yoke of France. In the meantime Napoleon had arrived at Paris, and commenced his preparations on a gigantic scale to retrieve his great disaster. In no period of his life did he show the great qualities of his mind more eminently than in this hour of sad calamity. Throughout the retreat he had maintained a constant equanimity and fortitude which alone saved even a wreck of his army; and if the Abbé de Pradt, his ambassador to the Polish diet, may be credited, as he passed through Warsaw he displayed a confidence and insensibility to misfortune which partake of the marvellous. According to this personage, who has not hesitated to put in the mouth of the Emperor the most vulgar and absurd language,* he talked in a strain of vapouring singularly overcharged, and repeated several times, with misplaced cynicism, the phrase: 'Well, from the sublime to the ridiculous there is but a step.' But in truth he possessed much of that callous indifference evinced by Charles XII. in similar circumstances, and was less touched by the loss of his army, than by an incident at Paris which demonstrated the precarious tenure upon which his dynasty occupied the throne. This was a conspiracy conducted by an obscure officer named Malet, who had been imprisoned for misconduct; but who, contriving to escape from confinement, spread a report of the death

with gunpowder. 'Here I am at last,' the man said. 'What! Dumas, do you not know me?' 'No; who are you?' 'I am the rearguard of the Grand Army—Marshal Ney; I have fired the last musket-shot on the bridge of Kowno, and have come here on foot through the forests as you see me.' Dumas and his host hastened to render the hero the services he required, and procured for him a carriage to convey him to Königsberg.—*Dumas*, iii. 485.

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Varsovie*, 212—220.

of the Emperor in Russia, and by dint of a forged decree of the Senate, annulling the imperial government and appointing him governor of Paris, nearly succeeded in seizing the reins of government. He gained over several officers and a regiment of the line; threw Savary and Pasquier, the minister and prefect of police, into prison; shot Hullin, governor of Paris; and was on the point of capturing the central military post, the person and office of the minister-at-war, when he accidentally encountered the individual having him in charge, who at once exposed the imposture, and the audacious rebel was apprehended. He and thirteen others, who had quiescently concurred in the enterprise, were executed on the plain of Grenelle the following day, Malet manifesting great intrepidity to the last moment. This extraordinary occurrence revealed to Napoleon how completely his empire rested on himself, since a mere rumour of his death was sufficient to stagger the faith of his officers and soldiers, and lead them to obey any bold adventurer who had art enough to deceive them, without reference to the hereditary claims of his son, the infant king of Rome.

The arrival of Napoleon at Paris took place during the night of the 18th December, and was so unexpected, that he experienced some difficulty in gaining admission to the Tuileries. The Empress had already retired to rest, and was greatly startled by his sudden appearance in her chamber. After an exclamation of surprise, she threw herself with rapture into his arms. Sinister rumours of some terrible reverse had already begun to circulate, notwithstanding the vigilant care taken to suppress intelligence; and the announcement of his abrupt arrival from the army caused a painful emotion of surprise in Paris. The next day the extent of the disaster was officially made known, and occasioned a general consternation throughout all France. But the firmness of the Emperor soon dispelled the gloom of apprehension, and infused into the nation a wonderful ardour to support him in the endeavour to maintain his sway in Europe. The Senate voted by acclamation his demand of 350,000 conscripts; and at the same time he caused to be presented to that body a report upon the strength and resources of the Empire, which gave a most flattering account of its physical prosperity under his rule. In this remarkable document, containing the final picture of France before she relapsed into the hands of the Bourbons, he showed how great had been her progress during the last few years in arts, manufactures, public improvements, useful institutions, magnificent erections—such as had never signalled any other administration in the annals of the world. The annual produce of her industry—agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial—was estimated at the gross sum of £280,000,000 sterling—an amount bespeaking unexampled general prosperity. The imports

from abroad were stated at £13,500,000 sterling. From 1800 to 1812, no less than £40,000,000 sterling had been spent in the formation of great roads, the most celebrated of which are those over the Simplon and the Maritime Alps into Italy; in the construction of canals, docks, quays, bridges, palaces, and public buildings, chiefly in the embellishment of Paris, which was stored with the principal masterpieces of art existing in Europe, and which he had rendered the fitting capital of the world. The population of the entire Empire, including the recent acquisitions, was 42,000,000, of which 28,000,000 were the proportion of old France—that is, of France as constituted in 1792. As the population had not been then estimated at above 25,000,000, it would appear that, notwithstanding all the loss of life that had attended the Revolution, a considerable increase in the numbers of the people had taken place in the course of the twenty years which had elapsed. A diminution was found to exist only in the ranks of the youths now advancing to adolescence, and who were becoming liable to the conscription; from which circumstance it became necessary, in the future emergencies of France, both to anticipate the levies assigned to each year, and to lower the standard of height, which was reduced to five feet; so that in the end the army was recruited with mere striplings of seventeen and eighteen, who were unable to withstand the hardships of a campaign under such a leader as Napoleon. The public income for the year 1813 was reckoned to be £40,000,000 sterling, and the expenditure about £1,000,000 less; but as such immense sums were drawn annually from the countries occupied by French troops, these figures are imperfect indexes of the real cost of the great armaments maintained by the Emperor. These, notwithstanding the losses of the Russian and Spanish campaigns, were still enormous as exhibited in this report. The whole disposable army of France amounted to 800,000 infantry, 100,000 cavalry, and 100,000 artillerymen and engineers—in all, ONE MILLION OF MEN! The navy consisted of 104 ships of the line and 50 frigates, manned by a maritime conscription of 20,000 seamen yearly. Thus it is evident that the forces and resources of Napoleon were yet sufficient to enable him to maintain his ascendancy in Europe, unless all its powers combined in one colossal league to crush him.

From the precautions he had taken to form depôts, and to call out the first and second bans of the Empire, comprising classes not actually subject to the conscription, before entering upon the Russian campaign, he was in a position to send forward immediately large reinforcements to Eugene, who had been driven out of Berlin and over the Elbe. Such was the rapidity and completeness of his combinations, that he was prepared so early as April to proceed in person to the theatre of the war; and he arrived at Erfurth on the 25th, to take the field against the combined

Russians and Prussians, now under the supreme command of the Emperor Alexander. His forces exceeded those of the allies, counting at least 180,000 fighting men, whilst the antagonist host was not more than 120,000. But this superiority was almost counterbalanced by the difference in the quality of the troops, the advantage of which had passed from the side of the French to that of their opponents. The Russian soldiers were all hardy, stalwart veterans; the Prussians were no longer the blustering automata of Jena, but well-trained, ardent, and impassioned patriots, armed with a burning zeal to vindicate the honour and avenge the wrongs of their country. The French, on the contrary, with the exception of certain picked regiments of the Old and Young Guard, were young conscripts who had not yet seen service; and although animated with perfect bravery and ardour, were unimured to the toils of war and the rough encounters of modern battles. The wonderful genius of Napoleon, however, availed to compensate all deficiencies, and never did it shine more brilliantly than in this his last aggressive campaign. The allies had, as in 1806, abandoned the defensive line of the Elbe, and advanced into Saxony, the two monarchs having their headquarters at Dresden, whence the king of Saxony, who adhered resolutely to the cause of his benefactor, had fled. Upon the approach of Napoleon, they moved their troops, to cover Leipzig, into the plain of Lützen, already so famous in the military annals of Germany, and where their great preponderance in cavalry promised to be of essential service. As he emerged into this plain, an ominous mischance occurred to Napoleon: Bessieres, Duke of Istria, commander of the Imperial Guard, fell from his horse, struck dead by a cannon-ball. The death of this favourite marshal affected him deeply, and threw a damp upon the spirits of the whole army. On the afternoon of the 2d May, the two hostile forces came unexpectedly into collision; and one of the most furious combats ensued that had yet marked the war. So tremendous was the onslaught of the allied cavalry on the right of the French, where Ney commanded, that they were saved from total rout only by the exertions of the Emperor in person, who exposed himself amidst the very thickest of the fire. After the battle had raged five hours, Eugene opportunely appeared on the field, and assailed the Russian flank, whereupon the allies retreated, but without being pursued by Napoleon, who in fact was nearly captured by a night attack of the Cossacks. The slaughter was greatest on the side of the French, who lost 18,000 men, whereas the allies had only from 15,000 to 16,000 killed and wounded. But the victory had finally remained with the former, which was of momentous consequence to Napoleon, as a defeat would have at once decided the irresolution of Austria, who only awaited the issue of events to throw her weight into the scale

against him. The allies retreated through Dresden, and took up a strong position at Bautzen, in which they were attacked by Napoleon on the 20th May, whilst Ney made a flank movement to take them in the rear. In this attempt he was arrested by the heroic resistance of Blücher, who averted a disaster similar to that of Marengo. But Napoleon at last, after two days' fighting, conquered the position, and compelled the allies to retire. Nearly 35,000 combatants were stretched lifeless or mutilated on the bloody field. He renewed the attack at Reichenbach on the 22d, but the Russian rearguard opposed a bold front to his eager pursuit, and kept him in check. As he stood with his escort beholding the affray, his favourite Duroc, Duke of Friuli, was killed whilst he was in the act of speaking to him. It was the anniversary of the death of Lannes, and Napoleon evinced even greater emotion than on that mournful occasion. He pressed the hand of the expiring hero: 'Duroc,' he said, 'there is another world, where we shall meet again;' anguish thus extorting from him an assurance of consolation which did not spring probably from a deep-rooted conviction of his mind.

These hard-contested battles, in which Napoleon displayed even more than usual ability, and exerted a greater personal intrepidity than he had felt necessary since the critical days of Rivoli and Arcola, to animate his soldiers, and impel them to victory, proved that he could no longer, with his debilitated troops, and against his invigorated enemies, even by the most masterly evolutions, strike those tremendous blows by which he had been wont to astound the world. Instead of being utterly discomfited and routed as at Austerlitz, Jena, or Friedland, the allies, albeit defeated by superior strategy and numbers, made good their retreat in the very best order, and quietly established themselves at Schweidnitz in Silesia, rather inclining towards Bohemia than towards Berlin or Poland, their true lines of communication. The bold attitude that Austria had now assumed induced them to swerve in this direction. The opportunity for recovering its lost possessions was too favourable for that power to resist the temptation to interpose authoritatively between the belligerents, and impose on them a peace of its dictation. The minister who now swayed the affairs of Austria was Metternich, a personage of great sagacity and cunning in diplomacy, who had been mainly instrumental in promoting the marriage of Maria-Louisa with Napoleon, as the only means of then saving the Austrian monarchy from ruin. Consequently he was friendly to the French alliance, and offered to combine with Napoleon, if he would consent to make such sacrifices as might insure the future independence of Europe. But the measure of these sacrifices was necessarily a subject of difference between them; for whilst Napoleon was willing to make restitutions to Austria, he still

aspired to retain his supremacy in Germany, Italy, Holland, and Spain, and even to remove Prussia back to the Vistula, constituting Berlin the capital of his brother Jerome, king of Westphalia. Such a scheme he had already propounded to Alexander, involving the cession of the Duchy of Warsaw to Prussia, and thereby finally extinguishing his fears as to a national reconstruction of Poland, with the view of detaching him from the coalition; but the Russian monarch was too much exasperated, and too firmly resolved to restore an equilibrium in Europe, to listen to such an overture, or indeed to entertain any separate negotiation. At the same time each party had good reasons to desire a temporary armistice, even if it did not lead to a definitive peace: Alexander, because he expected large reinforcements, as well from Russia as from Sweden, and the spontaneous levies in Prussia; Napoleon, because he was greatly incommoded on his line of communication to the Rhine by the partisan warfare of the insurgent population, and because he was apprehensive of precipitating a hostile determination on the part of Austria if he refused to grant an armistice, whilst he relied upon her favourable disposition as a mediator towards one so closely connected with her sovereign. Moved by these considerations, he signed the armistice of Pleswitz on the 4th June, by which he agreed to recede to the line of the Elbe, and suspend hostilities for a period of six weeks, negotiations being in the interim opened for a general peace in a congress held at Prague: a step which has been characterised as the most fatal he ever took, since he ought clearly to have pressed the defeated allies vigorously, cut them off from their communications, and completely annihilated them before Austria was in a position to afford them any effective assistance, which she could not as yet do for the identical six weeks of the truce, as her preparations were not completed. This assertion rests upon very insufficient grounds; inasmuch as Austria could certainly have thrown at least 100,000 men out of Bohemia upon his flank if he had pushed forward; and the allies occupied a very strong position at Schweidnitz, which he might be repulsed in attempting to force, since he had suffered a paralysing diminution in strength during the previous combats, and had equal reason with his enemies to await reinforcements, which were advancing to his aid from every extremity of his empire. Therefore it must be concluded that he acted as discreetly as circumstances permitted, although he might be somewhat biassed by his relationship to the Austrian court, and place too much confidence in its friendly dispositions. Be this as it may, however, Austria took very high ground towards him in the congress at Prague; for she was already in secret communication with Russia, Prussia, and England, who had formed an alliance at Reichenbach on the 14th June; and as he delayed to accept the harsh ultimatum trans-

mitted to him by Metternich on the 8th August, the congress was dissolved at midnight on the 10th August, to which time the armistice had been prolonged; and the next day Austria formally declared war against the Emperor of the French.

To this decisive conduct towards Napoleon the northern powers were incited not so much by an idea of their own present superiority over him, as by the extraordinary successes gained over his forces by the British general, Wellington, in Spain. The victory of Salamanca, won on the 22d July 1812 against Marmont, had opened Madrid to the conquerors, and compelled Soult to evacuate Andalusia, where he had so long exercised a devastating sovereignty; it had weighed greatly also with Alexander in encouraging him not to submit after the battle of the Moskowa, and the occupation of Moscow. It is true that, by an involuntary concentration of their scattered forces, the French commanders had again compelled Wellington to retire into Portugal, where, with all their physical predominance, they found it impossible to molest him successfully. From the difficulty of procuring supplies, they could not keep together in large bodies for any length of time; and when disseminated, they were assailed by swarms of guerillas, who inflicted on them prodigious losses. Nowhere was the system of Napoleon, 'to make war sustain war,' so prejudicial to his ultimate interests as in the Peninsula, since it inflamed the population with a boundless fury, and never for a moment allowed the French occupation to be other than purely hostile. From this cause, although Wellington had never a third, and sometimes not a fourth, of regular troops in comparison with the French, he was enabled to act against their armies separately from his central position in Portugal; and thus, acting upon the same principle, almost to realise the wonders of Napoleon's Italian campaign in 1796. On the other hand, he himself was repeatedly paralysed by the supineness and mismanagement of his own government; and yet more so through the imbecility, jealousy, and even treachery of the Spanish and Portuguese governments, particularly of the former. The Cortes sitting at Cadiz, whom the battle of Salamanca had relieved from blockade, and invested with the command of nearly half of Spain, had established a purely democratic government, which manifested the bitterest animosity against the British general even for his very successes. He was the constant object, moreover, of vituperation by the Spanish press, which charged him with every species of unworthy design, even to that of seizing the throne of the Peninsula. There are happily few instances of such black ingratitude by the organs of a nation towards one so essentially its benefactor: there is assuredly no instance in which so infamous a return was shamed by such magnanimity, fortitude, and discretion. It is impossible to peruse Wellington's despatches without being struck by the

extraordinary elevation and sagacity of his mind, with regard equally to the calumnies and treacheries of which he was the victim, and to his profound appreciation of the only means by which the discordant elements he had to work with could be brought into harmonious action. He was so far rewarded, that in the spring of 1813 the Cortes conferred on him the supreme command of all the armies in the Peninsula, although there is now little doubt that an intrigue was then pending, embracing members of the regency and the Cortes, to betray the cause of Spanish independence, and submit to the rule of the intrusive monarch. The news of the retreat from Russia served to stifle it for the moment, and to augment the influence of Wellington, who succeeded in at length maturing the necessary arrangements for prosecuting a vigorous campaign against the French in Spain.

In the eventful campaign of 1813, Wellington, as generalissimo of the allied forces, had nominally under his command nearly 200,000 men; but of these more than half were Spaniards, who could not be relied upon to confront the French in close encounter. The Portuguese amounted to 30,000 strong; and they, from their superior docility and aptitude for discipline, had, by the exertions of Beresford and other British officers, been formed into admirable troops, fitted for any operations in the field. But the main strength of his army consisted in 50,000 British, with an auxiliary corps of Germans, who had hitherto been uniformly successful in every conflict with the veterans of Napoleon. These latter were now fearfully diminished in number and attenuated in strength, as well from the reverses and desultory extermination to which they had been subjected, as from the considerable draughts made upon them by the Emperor for the war in Germany. At the present moment, the French troops in the whole Peninsula did not exceed 240,000 men, of whom more than 30,000 were in the hospitals, and other 40,000 distributed in garrisons through the provinces, 10,000 being stationed at Madrid alone. They were divided into three principal armies—that of Suchet, in Valencia and Arragon, 70,000 strong; that of Clausel, in Biscay and Navarre, 40,000 strong; and that under King Joseph in person and Marshal Jourdan, concentrated at Burgos and Valladolid, and counting 60,000 fighting men. It was against the latter that Wellington combined his principal efforts. Entering Spain in the latter part of May by Ciudad Rodrigo and Salamanca, he pushed rapidly across the Douro, and drove the discouraged French, who abandoned position after position, over the river Ebro, until they at length halted at Vittoria, where, having received detached reinforcements, it behoved them to make a stand, to save themselves from annihilation. On the 21st June, Wellington assaulted them in a very strong position in front of Vittoria—he leading the centre attack in person, whilst Hill

assailed on the left, and Graham on the right. All the three attacks were successful, particularly Graham's, who penetrated so far as to intercept the French retreat on the road to Bayonne. All then became inextricable confusion in the French army; never was a disciplined host put to a more complete rout. The whole of the artillery, ammunition, and baggage, including the private equipages of King Joseph, fell into the hands of the victors; the spoil was the most prodigious ever known, containing almost the entire plunder of the French during their long occupation of the Peninsula, together with great numbers of women who had linked themselves to their fortunes. Upwards of £1,000,000 sterling was found in the military chest, and an amount equally large in money and valuables became the prey of the soldiers and camp-followers. This excessive plunder, of which a very small share was secured to the administration of the army, caused a terrible demoralisation among the allied troops, especially the British, who abandoned themselves in great numbers to drunkenness and every species of debauchery, inso-much that, as Wellington has himself recorded, he lost more men in the pursuit than the flying enemy. But the effect of the victory was not the less decisive, since it led to the total expulsion of the French from Spain. The destruction of Joseph's army rendered the positions of Clausel and Suchet untenable, and they accordingly both fell back behind the Ebro; the former following Joseph through the defiles of the Pyrenees into France, the latter retiring on Tarragona and Tortosa.

The intelligence of this most unexpected disaster, reaching him in the very height of his important communications with the court of Austria, exasperated Napoleon to the highest pitch. As had begun to be usual with him since his change of fortune, he railed in unmeasured terms against his brother and his marshals for their want of ability and firmness; and forthwith despatched Soult, who had been previously transferred to Germany, to take the command of the defeated armies. That celebrated commander reached Bayonne on the 13th July, and immediately took measures to organise the forces he found there assembled. These amounted to at least 100,000 men, exclusive of Suchet's army, still hovering in Catalonia, and he speedily put them in order, to attempt a fresh invasion of Spain. His immediate object was to raise the sieges of Pampeluna and San Sebastian, the two last strongholds held by the French, serving as bases beyond the Pyrenees, and which were closely invested by Wellington. He advanced in three columns up the defiles on the morning of the 25th, directing his principal attack against the right of the British, which he surprised and defeated. Forcing the passes of Roncesvalles and Bastan, he had approached within fourteen miles of Pampeluna, when he was arrested, first by

Picton at Zubiri, and eventually by Wellington in person at Soraoren, where, after a terrific conflict, the French marshal was repulsed, and compelled to retrograde. In several subsequent encounters he was worsted by the British general, and at length his troops were so completely discouraged, that they refused to stand an assault even behind intrenchments, and his retreat degenerated into a flight. Pressed within narrow defiles, and by revengeful enemies thundering in pursuit, they fled in irremediable disorder, disregarding the voice of their heroic leader, who in vain reproached them with cowardice, and called upon them to turn and face their foes. Such were the deplorable features of this short campaign, which lasted only a week, that the French are computed to have lost in killed, wounded, prisoners, and missing, not less than from 15,000 to 18,000 men. On the 1st August, Soult regained, with his discomfited host, the Bidassoa and the French frontier; and on the following day Clausel was dislodged from his last post on the Spanish soil, and with great slaughter hunted into France. Pampeluna and San Sebastian were henceforth left to their fate, beyond another abortive inroad of Soult, Clausel, and Foy, with 45,000 men, on the 30th August, which was defeated by the Spaniards and Portuguese, almost unaided by the British; the first subsequently capitulated, and the latter was taken by storm with unparalleled bravery, sullied in the hour of success by horrible atrocities. Thus on the western frontier of the Pyrenees Spain was definitively emancipated from the French, and Wellington stood prepared, when the fitting moment arrived, to invade with his victorious legions the sacred precincts of the great Empire.

But no reverses, however astounding, could shake the obstinate pride of Napoleon, or relax the tenacity of his hold on absolute supremacy in Europe. He might have made peace at this period upon terms which would still have left him master of Italy and great part of Germany, perhaps of Spain, if he could reconquer it. But too long accustomed to dictate conditions to prostrate adversaries, he could not brook the idea of yielding to accept them; and the Empress Maria-Louisa, who had been left regent in his absence, faithfully portrayed his feelings when she said to the Senate 'that he would not occupy a dishonoured throne, or wear a crown without glory.' In truth, to the Empress, whom during the armistice of Pleswitz he had met at Mayence, to the Senate, to his counsellors, to his marshals, he held a uniform language: '*All, or nothing!*' he said. 'If we recede, we forfeit our political superiority; the enemy would reduce it; and on its continuance our existence depends.' Firm in this persuasion, he was resolute to hold fast by the line of the Elbe, and fight the battle for empire in the fields of Saxony. His marshals

were dissatisfied with this resolution, contending that if he was determined not to make peace, he ought to plant himself on the defensive line of the Rhine, since in the heart of Germany he was exposed to the chance of an annihilating disaster. This they inferred not so much from the predominating force of the allies, as from the probability of defection by the confederated princes, owing to the universal fermentation of the German people, who were stimulated by the secret societies of the Tugendbund and Bürschenschaft, which had been long labouring to prepare a general insurrection against the French. Already the communications were difficult to maintain with the Rhine, and in case of misfortune, they would be altogether intercepted. To these arguments the Emperor replied by adducing the political reason against a retrogression; and, moreover, alleged that he had been often in a much more critical situation than the present one, from which, by boldness, he had extricated himself. 'Was I not in a position still more hazardous at Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram? From Arcola to this day all the important steps I have taken have been hazards of the same description; and in so doing, I have only followed the example of other great conquerors.' He referred to Alexander on the Indus, Hannibal at Cannæ, Cæsar at Pharsalia, and asked whether they occupied themselves about their line of retreat when the moment had come to strike for the empire of the world. Silencing, if not convincing his malcontent lieutenants, he disposed his army on the Elbe, with his head-quarters at Dresden, defending it with a line of fortresses from the portals of Bohemia to its mouth at Hamburg, which had been previously reconquered from a Russo-Swedish force by Davout, the Marshal Prince d'Eckmühl, who subjected its unfortunate and peaceful burghers to merciless extortions.

Upon the dissolution of the Congress of Prague, and the resumption of hostilities, the relative situation of the belligerents was materially altered; since not only had Austria become a principal in the war, but Bernadotte, Prince-Royal of Sweden, had appeared upon the scene, to aid in dealing the death-blow to his old master and benefactor. Yet although the forces of Napoleon were numerically inferior to those of the allies, he had the advantage of possessing a central position, from which he might act on any point where a blow was to be struck. Such, at the same time, were the extraordinary exertions he had made to bring up the conscripts and reserves, that he now mustered in the whole 300,000 men for active operations, of whom, however, only 45,000 were horse, light and heavy, having an immense artillery train of 1250 guns. They were divided into three armies: one under his own immediate command, comprising nearly 200,000 men, stationed between Dresden and Leignitz in Silesia; another under Oudinot,

Duke of Reggio, 80,000 strong, posted between Torgau and Magdeburg; and a third under St Cyr at Pirna, consisting of 25,000 men, occupying an intrenched camp at the entrance of the Bohemian defiles. To oppose this vast array, the allies had also three armies, but more widely separated than those of the French Emperor: first, the Grand Army, collected in Bohemia, and forming a mass of 220,000 men, of whom 80,000 were Prussians and Russians, the remainder Austrians, having 40,000 magnificent cavalry, and 700 pieces of cannon; secondly, the Army of Silesia, under Blücher, counting 80,000 men, of whom 20,000 were cavalry, regular and irregular, with 350 guns; thirdly, the Army of the North, under Bernadotte, 90,000 strong, with 390 pieces of artillery. Thus the allies had 390,000 men actually in line on the decisive theatre of combat against 300,000 possessed by Napoleon. Besides these, a reserve of Russians was advancing under Bennigsen, consisting of 50,000 men, and another reserve of equal amount was organising in Austria; whereas Napoleon had no reserve whatever to look to, as every available conscript had been already marched from the Rhine. He had, it is true, 100,000 veterans in the fortresses on the Vistula, the Oder, and the Elbe, which he still retained, all of whom were now lost to him, unless by victory he could relieve them from blockade. On the other hand, the blockading forces were of equal amount, but were far from being of the same value, since they consisted principally of German *landwehr*, or militia, who sufficed for that restrictive service. Hence the error of Napoleon in not evacuating Danzig and the other fortresses of Prussia, as subsequently those in other parts of Germany, proved of signal detriment to him, and may be almost said to have caused his ruin. In addition to these prodigious accumulations of combatants—arrayed on one side to contend for the overshadowing despotism of one man, and on the other for the independence of Europe—were Austrians confronting Bavarians on the Inn, other Austrians threatening Italians on the Adige, British and Spanish measuring swords against French in Catalonia and on the Adour, Swedes and Mecklenburghers fighting Danes on the Alster and in Holstein; insomuch that to decide the momentous question at stake, 900,000 men appeared in arms to achieve the emancipation of Europe, 700,000 to rivet its chains. The spectacle was the more amazing, from so many different nations co-operating in one object—from the savage Cossacks and Calmucks to the ardent bands of patriotic Germans and the most disciplined soldiers of Western Europe. And in another view the spectacle was even more surprising, that this movement of a continent in arms was stimulated and maintained by the subsidies of a power the least of all in geographical extent, but which, monopolising the trade of the world, although engaged in an unfortunate struggle with its own offspring in another

hemisphere, could afford to spend £10,500,000 sterling in aids to its European associates, whilst its individual expenditure for the same year, the twentieth of the war, arose to the astounding amount of £108,000,000 in addition! Such the enormous physical and monetary strain on the resources of communities required to beat down the colossus of a revolution engendered in the hallowed germ of liberty, and reared to magnitude on the blood, oppression, and spoliation of nations! All prior struggles of men, of races, of predominances, are those of pigmies in comparison!

The dangers of a coalition, especially of one so extensive and heterogeneous as the present, consist in the almost inevitable dissensions that spring up among its members, and which accrue alike from prosperity and from adversity. Nothing but the sincerity and zeal of the Emperor Alexander, backed by the grateful acquiescence of the king of Prussia, upon whom misfortune had operated most wholesomely, could have averted this result on the existing occasion. Both the emperor of Austria and the Prince of Sweden were difficult parties to deal with, since they had each, from very natural causes, a repugnance to push matters to extremity against the French Emperor or people. The latter, moreover, was a testy and arrogant personage, who advanced the loftiest pretensions, although his hearty co-operation was by no means to be relied on. In a condition of such perplexity, Alexander, with equal policy and magnanimity waiving his own title to the supreme command, caused it to be conferred on Prince Schwartzemberg, the Austrian generalissimo; whilst to animate the zeal of Bernadotte, he was promised the cession of Norway, to be wrested from Denmark, whose monarch had thought fit to remain faithful to Napoleon, and his native army of Swedes was augmented by Russian and Prussian contingents, the whole being placed under his separate independent command. These important preliminaries being arranged on the side of the allies, hostilities were commenced on the 15th August by Blucher, who on that day crossed the Katzbach, and compelled Macdonald to fall back. But Napoleon, who was intent to act decisively in Silesia, from the desire of seizing Berlin, moved upon him in great force, and drove him, in his turn, to beat a prudent retreat. Meanwhile the allied Grand Army moved, as had been arranged, out of Bohemia, to take advantage of Napoleon's absence and capture Dresden, the great base of his operations. St Cyr was of course wholly unable to resist the mighty torrent, and he accordingly recoiled on the capital, which was invested by Schwartzemberg on the 24th. Although defended by ramparts and redoubts, Dresden could not be called a fortification; and it might easily have been taken by the allies, if they had immediately attacked it; but Schwartzemberg delayed until his left, under Klenau, had come up, notwithstanding the pressing remon-

stances of Alexander, and the golden opportunity was lost. Apprised of the danger threatening his rear, Napoleon hastened back with his Guard, the heavy cavalry, and the corps of Victor and Marmont. He was at first disposed to push on to Pirna, and fall upon the rear of the enemy; but fearful Dresden might be taken in the interim, he hurried to that city, which he reached on the 26th. The bombardment had already commenced, and a terrible fire of grape crossed the only avenue by which the Emperor could penetrate; crawling on his hands and knees, he passed the more exposed part of the road, traversed the bridge, halted to encourage the old king, who was in an agony of alarm for the fate of his capital, and then advanced to the outer walls to reconnoitre the positions of the besiegers. His troops, meanwhile, followed, pouring through the city with loud cries, and eager for the combat, although they had marched during the last four days, together with the Emperor himself, upwards of 120 English miles, with very indifferent rations. Sallying forth upon the allies, they soon dislodged them from the posts they had seized, and before nightfall, drove them beyond cannon-range of the city, both armies bivouacking without the walls amidst a deluge of rain. In the morning, Napoleon assumed the offensive, and attacked the allies on their two wings, resting his weakened centre on Dresden. By this skilful manœuvre he was enabled to overwhelm them on both flanks, particularly the left, which was utterly routed, since Klenau had not even yet come into line; whereupon Schwartzberg ordered a general retreat, hastened in his determination by the appalling death of Moreau, who had recently returned from America, and joined the head-quarters of Alexander, with whom he was in conversation at the moment he was struck. The retreat was at first conducted in an orderly manner; but it soon became involved in confusion amid the narrow defiles of Bohemia, and the losses of the allies were enormous. They had already lost at least 25,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, before Dresden, with numerous cannon and standards; Murat, St Cyr, and Marmont, hunted them with fury; guns, men, and caissons were captured at every step: the victory of Napoleon was one of the most complete, as well as one of the ablest, he ever gained. The allies were struck with consternation by so fearful a catastrophe, and their commanders sought to throw the blame of it on each other: their mutual recriminations indeed reached such a height, that but for a strong sense of the common danger, the coalition would in all probability have been forthwith dissolved.

An extraordinary interposition of fortune saved them from the effects of their calamity, and robbed Napoleon of the fruits of his achievement. Calculating upon the overthrow of the allies, he had placed Vandamme at the head of 30,000 men towards Peters-

walde, to intercept their retreat; and that general, driving before him Ostermann, who opposed him with an unequal force, had actually descended into the Bohemian plain with the view of gaining Töplitz, where all the roads from the defiles met as at a common point. In front of Töplitz, however, on the plain between it and Culm, Ostermann stood his ground on the 29th, and by an obstinate resistance, stopped the French general in his advance. Momentous were the consequences of this check. Vandamme, relying confidently upon being supported by Napoleon, remained all night in his position, and received the attack on the following morning. But in the meantime the retreating army had come upon him, and he was encompassed by overwhelming numbers. Alarmed at his critical situation, he straightway commenced a retreat, and succeeded in forcing his way through Culm; but when he arrived at the foot of the defile of Tellnitz, leading to Peterswalde, he beheld with horror the Prussian standards floating at the top of the pass. In truth Kleist, with his corps of 18,000 men, having been hard pressed by St Cyr, had crossed through the forest of Schönwald, and debouched upon Peterswalde, directly in the rear of Vandamme. Owing to the narrowness of the defile, Kleist was unable to perceive that the French were pursued; and instead of standing firm to receive them, he dashed down amongst them, intent only to cut his way to Töplitz. Thus a most singular conflict ensued: the French and Prussians striving rather to force a passage through each other's ranks than to engage in a pitched fight. The combatants soon became completely intermingled; and so great was the confusion, that each of the opposite generals was taken prisoner. Kleist was rescued, but Vandamme remained in the hands of the enemy. At length the Russians, charging into the midst of the fray, put an end to the struggle; the French cavalry, headed by Corbineau, galloping furiously up the heights, got off; and some 10,000 men escaped across the mountains and through the woods; but the remainder were slaughtered or captured. Their total loss in the two battles of Culm was at least 18,000 men, 60 pieces of cannon, and 300 caissons; almost equal in extent to that of the allies in the battle of Dresden. So great and unexpected a triumph caused an immediate reaction among the allies, and converted their previous depression into joy and hope. A very contrary effect was produced among the French troops, and on Napoleon himself, who received the dismal tidings with apparent coldness, but in reality with deep emotion. As usual with him, he laid the blame wholly on Vandamme, for having imprudently descended into the plain; whereas it appears certain he had ordered him positively to proceed to Töplitz, telling him he would there receive the sword of the conquered, and earn his marshal's baton. The fault lay with himself exclusively, and sprung from

those defects of his character which became very glaring in the days of his misfortune. Two objects he cherished dearly—to punish the king of Prussia by ravaging Berlin, and to exterminate Bernadotte, whom he had never liked, and against whom he was now incensed to madness. On this account he paused with his Guards at Pirna in pursuit of the allied Grand Army, and from that place returned to Dresden, concluding that he had at least nothing to fear for some time on the side of Bohemia, even if Vandamme failed to complete the disaster commenced at Dresden; and that, in the meantime, he would have an opportunity of defeating Blücher, and subsequently of falling with all his might on the obnoxious Prince of Sweden. Blinded by his prepossessions, and resolutely shutting his eyes to the altered character of his own and the allied troops, he held that Vandamme was strong enough to withhold and disperse the recoiling army when placed on its direct line of retreat to Prague; and by this grievous miscalculation he brought upon himself a calamity which in its results was fatal to his Empire.

Nevertheless, in this campaign, more than in any other, was seen how much of his great success in arms had been owing to his own genius, and how inefficient in separate command were even the most famous of his lieutenants. Macdonald had been intrusted with the command in Silesia; but so faulty were his dispositions, so erroneous his conception of Blücher's force and designs, that he allowed himself to be surprised on the Katzbach, attacked in detail, and defeated with prodigious loss, losing from the 26th to the 29th August 25,000 men, of whom 18,000 were prisoners, and 103 pieces of cannon. In the same manner Oudinot, who commanded the army opposed to Bernadotte, pushing onwards incautiously towards Berlin, was met and defeated on the 23d at Gross-Beeren, being driven back with disgrace on Trebbin. In vain the Emperor displaced him, and appointed Ney in his stead. That intrepid marshal fell into more grievous blunders than his predecessor, and suffered a terrible defeat at Dennewitz on the 6th September and the following day, in which his army was utterly routed, and its wrecks saved only under the cannon of Torgau. In these battles the loss of the French would have been much more severe had Bernadotte pushed the pursuit actively against them; but he evinced a manifest repugnance to do so, and even checked the eagerness of Bülow, the Prussian general, when he urged more energetic action. Foreseeing the probability of Napoleon's dethronement, he contemplated the chance of succeeding him, and strove, accordingly, to moderate his hostilities against those who might hereafter be his subjects, and whom it was his interest to propitiate rather than to exasperate.

It was not so much the actual loss sustained in these various

discomfitures that affected Napoleon most sensibly; it was the moral effect they produced on his own army, and particularly on the Confederates of the Rhine. The king of Bavaria had already made his peace with the allied sovereigns; the king of Saxony personally remained faithful, but his people were animated with the same enthusiastic spirit for the deliverance of the German Fatherland which prevailed throughout the entire continent. Napoleon, however, still struggled manfully against fortune, and scorned to confess himself defeated. He rushed rapidly upon Blücher after his victory of the Katzbach, and compelled him to recross that river; he returned to bar the Bohemian defiles against Schwartzberg, who, in his absence, ventured to resume an offensive movement. Intimidated by his presence, the Austrian general halted, and he returned to Dresden: again the allies advanced, and again he hurled them into the plain. Blücher, meanwhile, grew bolder when he was thus engaged; and the moment he had finished with Schwartzberg, he was called upon to repel the aggressions of the Prussian veteran. In these incessant movements he often slept in barns and hovels on straw; and although he at length wearied out his generals and soldiers, he himself was insensible to fatigue, and enjoyed the best possible health, as he invariably did during his campaigns, even amidst all the horrors of the Russian retreat. But it was physically impossible that with three armies thus simultaneously pressing upon his weakened forces, he could continue to prosecute an offensive warfare; and accordingly, at the end of September, he abandoned altogether the right bank of the Elbe, concentrating himself on its lower course, and leaving St Cyr in Dresden with a garrison of 35,000 men. His effective strength was greatly impaired, and from the long occupation of the country, the most frightful destitution prevailed amongst his soldiers; whereas the allies, by the provident supplies of England, were abundantly furnished with all necessary food and comforts. His communications with the Rhine were precarious: the Cossacks scoured the country in his rear, and had even penetrated to Cassel, the capital of Jerome's kingdom of Westphalia, which was dissolved by a proclamation of their barbarian leader Chernicheff. His situation was thus growing truly deplorable, and the deepest discouragement reigned among the troops. When fully concentrated, they now only mustered 170,000 men, whilst the three armies of the allies contained at least 300,000 combatants, with an overwhelming preponderance of light horse, an invaluable arm in the straitened circumstances to which the French Emperor was reduced. But despite all the dangers and difficulties besetting him, Napoleon still maintained the expediency of keeping on the offensive, and actually proposed to recross the Elbe and carry the war into the heart of Prussia, where ample supplies might be

obtained for the famished army. In such an event each of the belligerents would be cut off from his direct line of communication; but with this difference in favour of the allies, that they always had the north and south of Germany open to them, whereas Napoleon would be completely isolated from France. The question was, whether, in his desperate emergency, he should disregard all the rules of prudence, push on to the Oder, collect his beleaguered garrisons from the fortresses on that river and the Vistula, and when thus powerfully reinforced, turn and fight a decisive battle, to reopen his communications and recover his ascendancy. The scheme possessed that daring and brilliant character which suited his adventurous genius; but when he propounded it to his marshals, they were appalled at its hazards, and universally condemned it as certain to end in utter ruin. Their representations, however, had little weight with the Emperor, and he had already issued orders to commence the movement on Berlin, when the defection of Bavaria publicly transpired, an event which inspired in the marshals such apprehensions, that they almost mutinied against his authority, and he at last reluctantly yielded to their importunities. A retreat upon Leipzig was determined upon; but too late to avoid a battle, since Bernadotte and Blücher had united their forces, and were completely in the French rear, whilst the Grand Army was advancing rapidly from Bohemia to co-operate with them. True to his infatuated system of retaining strongholds which would be useless to him in case of defeat, Napoleon left St Cyr in Dresden with its immense garrison of 35,000 men, who might have stemmed the tide of disaster in the open field, but were of no avail behind the walls of a town. He reached Leipzig on the 15th October, and that same evening disposed his troops in and around the city, to defend it against the assaults of the enemy, it having become necessary, for the safety of the army, to hold Leipzig to the last extremity. On all sides the allies closed in around him, and the hour rapidly approached which was to decide the grand problem at issue for the enthralment or enfranchisement of mankind.

At nine in the morning of the 16th the mighty contest commenced, in which nearly half a million of trained soldiers were to take part, by an attack on the side of the Grand Army of the allies.* From that hour until six in the evening the deadly

* Immediately preceding the battle, Schwarzenberg issued the following proclamation, which, as embodying the feelings with which the war against the French was regarded, is worthy to be recorded:—

‘The most important epoch of this sacred war has arrived, brave warriors! Prepare for the combat. The bond which unites so many powerful nations in the most just, as well as the greatest of causes, is about to be yet closer drawn, and rendered indissoluble on the field of battle. Russians, Prussians, Austrians! you all combat for the same cause; you fight for the liberty of Europe, for the independence of your children, for the immortal renown of your names. All for

struggle raged, Napoleon directing in person his serried legions to the assault. The officers of his staff fell one by one at his side, but he stood undaunted, and not a missile grazed his charmed person. By a desperate lunge he pierced the very centre of the allies, captured their guns, overrode their battalions, and raised the hurrah of victory; but the shout of exultation was premature, for the Russian czar, emulating the heroism of his great antagonist, bore himself, with his guards, into the thick of the fray, restored the battle, repulsed the French, and won the honour of the day. On both flanks, meanwhile, the bloody strife was obstinately maintained; but at length the great superiority of the allies gave them the mastery, and the French were obliged to retire discomfited. On the north of Leipzig, Blucher defeated Ney with great loss, and drove him to retreat beyond the Partha, where the restless Cossacks assailed him in the night, and robbed him of thirty guns. The general result of the battle, therefore, was unfavourable to Napoleon; for, as now usual with him, he had been successful only where he commanded in person. It was, in fact, equivalent to a defeat, since nothing but a victory could save him; and he ought undoubtedly to have forthwith commenced his retreat to the Rhine whilst there was yet time; for if he delayed, Benningsen on one side, and Bernadotte on the other, would be upon him, and the allies reinforced by 100,000 men. Yet, stubborn in his pride, and hoping still to catch the enemy in some flagrant fault, he did delay, and even to the 18th; when at length the reluctant Prince of Sweden was induced, by the most urgent remonstrances and reproofs, chiefly on the part of the English envoy, Sir Charles Stewart, since Marquis of Londonderry, to move his forces into line, and join in the attack. Then all was hopeless; the French soldiers fought with an intrepidity against overwhelming odds which was worthy of their old military renown; Napoleon opposed all his approved skill and valour to check the encroaching foe: but it was in vain; the Saxons, in the critical moment of the conflict, deserted his standards; and by nightfall he was driven back into Leipzig with unparalleled slaughter. Most gloomy was that night as he deliberated with his dejected marshals on what desperate alternative to embrace; but soon the report of the engineers cut short their conference, by the fearful announcement that all their ammunition was exhausted. Napoleon, overcome with fatigue, had fallen asleep in his chair; suddenly he awoke, and started up, exclaiming, with a look of bewilderment around him, 'Am I awake, or is it a dream?' Too speedily came the bitter consciousness of the reality, and with a mournful sigh he gave the word to 'retreat.'

each! each for all! With this for our motto, the sacred combat is about to commence. Be steadfast at the decisive moment, and the victory is our own.'

Awful, truly, was now that word, for it presaged disasters second only to those of Russia. Only two narrow bridges conducted across the marshes and stream of the Elster, by which the French could retire, so incredible had been the infatuation of the Emperor in neglecting facilities of retreat. They crowded over them in dreadful confusion, whilst their rearguard attempted to withstand the furious assaults of the allies. One of the bridges gave way, and with howls of horror the multitude was plunged into the water. The other bridge was prematurely fired, and the sole avenue of safety destroyed. Macdonald swam his horse across the river; the heroic Poniatowski made a like effort, but perished; hundreds of the soldiers floundered into the channel and were drowned. The whole rearguard, amounting to 15,000 men, was taken prisoner, together with several generals. The total loss of the French during the three days exceeded 60,000 men; whilst the allies, on their side, had nearly 50,000 killed and wounded. The trophies of the victory were immense, including almost all the French artillery. Napoleon had, early in the morning, held a farewell interview with the king and queen of Saxony, whom he absolved from their ties to him, and who earnestly exhorted him to provide for his personal safety. This was in greater jeopardy than he thought, for he found it impossible to force his way through the dense mass of fugitives pouring towards the bridge; and he only escaped through the zeal of a citizen, who pointed out to him a by-path which led him by a long circuit outside the suburb. Whilst he was thus a fugitive, saving himself with difficulty from the last ignominy of capture, his conquerors entered the city of Leipzig in triumph, and met, amidst the rapturous acclamations of their troops and of the inhabitants, at noon on the principal square. This scene was one of the most imposing and exciting ever witnessed amongst men: the emperors of Russia and Austria, the king of Prussia, the Prince of Sweden, with innumerable generals of every uniform, advanced into the midst to salute and congratulate each other; an emotion of awe tempering the wild throb of exultation at the stupendous triumph that had been achieved.

The pursuit was intrusted to Blucher and Platoff, the famed Hetman of the Cossacks, who harassed, without intermission, the retreating French. At Erfurth, the former scene of his grandeur, Napoleon halted two days to reorganise the army, and recruit it from the magazines he had there collected. It was then found that his force was reduced to 90,000 men; and there was every prospect of his losing 20,000 more, before he could reach the Rhine, since the number of stragglers was continually augmenting, all of whom inevitably fell into the hands of the Cossacks. As the country was thoroughly exhausted, his soldiers suffered the severest privations; and many lay down in the ditches on the

roadside to perish by the sword or of famine. As he approached Hanau on the route to Mayence, a startling spectacle met his eye: directly in front of him, on the high road, and in a thick surrounding forest, stood Wrede with nearly 60,000 Austrians and Bavarians to contest his passage. Not a moment was to be lost; already the Cossack vanguard was in sight, and he must cut his way through the perfidious general, who had so long fought under his orders, or succumb to his stern fate. The sense of their imminent danger rallied his troops to their standards, and armed them with the energy of despair. After an obstinate struggle, they drove the Bavarians out of the wood, and ultimately completely routed them with a loss of 10,000 men. They, however, left 7000 men on the field, half of whom were wounded, who could not be removed from the want of carriages. The way being thus cleared, Napoleon pushed rapidly on through Frankfurt to Mayence, which he reached on the 1st November, and where the shattered remnants of his mighty host passed finally, in shame and mortification, from the soil of Germany to the left bank of the Rhine, whence they were not destined again to emerge. The allies followed him to the edge of the stream, and then put their troops into winter quarters, detaching different corps to complete the successes of the campaign by reducing the now isolated fortresses on the Elbe, Oder, and Vistula, in which nearly 150,000 men were confined, who all fell into the power of the conquerors, and were lost to Napoleon in his coming death-struggle. Before the end of 1813, Germany was wholly emancipated from French dominion, and likewise Holland, which gladly shook off the yoke under which it had so long groaned, and with loud demonstrations of joy, hailed the return of their former sovereign, the Prince of Orange.

The defeated Emperor returned to his capital on the 9th of November. Deep consternation reigned in Paris at the dangers which menaced the country, and a feeling of discontent was rapidly gaining ground at the prodigious sacrifices demanded by the insatiable Napoleon. Nevertheless, he found the Council of State and the Senate as obsequious as formerly, and successive levies of 600,000 men were decreed, to be taken as well from the classes legally liable to the conscription, as from those which had already passed the ordeal, or would be exposed to it only in 1815. But it was impossible that any such number of men could be raised in time to resist the invasion of the allies, which was impending, as in 1793, on all the vulnerable frontiers of France. The allied sovereigns, however, had learnt many a terrible lesson since that wondrous epoch, and they now wisely held a very different language. They spoke with a noble moderation of their own desires, which tended only to restore the independence of nations, and to respect that of France itself, which they offered

to leave with what had been called its natural boundaries—namely, the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees—an extent of territory far exceeding the empire of the old kings of France. This declaration was extremely unpalatable to Napoleon, who was assailed with universal clamours to make peace; but in reality, whilst feigning to be inspired with the like sentiments, still adhered to a prosecution of the war. He could not avoid, however, listening to the overtures of the allies; and a negotiation for peace was commenced, which on his part was purely illusory. But it served his purpose to boast his pacific intentions to the Legislative Body, which at this moment of national disaster he summoned to meet at Paris. He opened its session with great pomp, and addressed it in an energetic harangue, appealing with felicitous fervour to the feelings and principles which animate great communities to patriotic exertions. But the response he elicited was little in accordance with his expectations. For the first time since the suppression of the Tribunate, the voice of censure and opposition was heard. In the report of its committee, the Legislative Body presented a strong remonstrance against the continuance of the war, and drew a deplorable picture of the impoverished state of France, denuded at once of commerce, manufactures, and defenders. After the long reign of slavery, this outburst of freedom produced an extraordinary sensation, and occasioned in the Emperor a paroxysm of indignation. He at once dissolved the Legislative Body, animadverting upon its unseasonable truculence with vehement wrath, and henceforth proceeded, of his own authority, to take all the measures he deemed necessary for the defence of his empire, and, as he yet dared to hope, for the recovery of his predominance in Europe.

Wellington, in obedience to the express injunctions of his government, had already invaded France on the side of the Pyrenees, and defeated Soult with heavy loss in a series of actions before Bayonne; Eugene had been compelled to give way before the Austrians in Italy, which Napoleon instructed him to evacuate, but subsequently countermanded the order; Murat had made his peace with the allies, and, as the price of his base desertion of his brother-in-law, had received the promise of being maintained on the throne of Naples. From all sides nothing but the report of misfortunes came; and so sunk were the resources of the Emperor, that from sheer inability to defend it, he abandoned the line of the Rhine, and retired behind the barrier of the Vosges mountains. The allies, in consequence, crossed that celebrated river on the last day of 1813 in two main divisions: Schwartzemberg, at the head of the Grand Army, mustering 200,000 combatants in the field, penetrated by Basle through Switzerland, dividing his immense host into nine corps, and

stretching over all the intermediate country between the Rhine and the Rhone; Blucher, at the head of the Army of Silesia, 130,000 strong, passed between Mayence and Strasburg; whilst Bernadotte, with his heterogeneous army of 180,000 men, was intended to operate in Belgium and Flanders. Against such a prodigious mass of foes, pressing in converging lines on the common centre of Paris, the French Emperor could barely oppose 120,000 men for active warfare, distributed over a vast expanse of frontier, and unable to concentrate more than 60,000 men on any one point to deal a decisive blow. But still he had the advantage, in his skilful hands immeasurable, of occupying the diameter of the vast circle described by the allies, and of holding an undivided command, which left him free to act as emergencies arose. On the other hand, the invaders acted at great distances from each other, upon a combined plan of operations liable at any moment to be disarranged, whereby the whole might be frustrated; and, moreover, divided counsels paralysed them, Alexander and Schwartzenberg being at direct variance as to the mode of conducting the campaign. This arose not from any difference in a military point of view, but from regard to the political complexion of the contest. Austria, still true to her selfish instincts, desired that the invasion should be directed towards the south of France, in order that the conquest of Italy might be the more certainly secured; and she was likewise influenced by a natural anxiety to save the throne of Napoleon; whereas Alexander maintained the expediency of marching directly upon Paris, and of deposing Napoleon, with whom, as he very justly argued, no peace could ever be permanent. In these views the Russian autocrat was supported by the king of Prussia, and particularly by the British minister Lord Castlereagh, who had recently joined the head-quarters of the sovereigns, and whom the precious subsidies of England and his own firmness of character invested with almost commanding influence. In the end this policy was adopted, and Alexander issued a proclamation to the French people, in which, after recounting his individual wrongs against Napoleon, he disclaimed any hostile intentions against France, or any wish to interfere with her domestic government, and expressly avowed that the war waged by the allies was against the man who had proved himself the common disturber and oppressor of mankind. In the meantime the prospect of an accommodation was not altogether relinquished; a congress was assembled at Chatillon, in which Napoleon was represented by Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, and negotiations continued to be carried on simultaneously with the prosecution of hostilities. But the demands of the allies had risen since they had crossed the Rhine, and they now insisted that France should be reduced to her ancient limits, be shorn of all

her acquisitions made since her first victorious irruption under Dumouriez.

Never was the indomitable spirit of the great Emperor, his perseverance or his genius, more strikingly displayed than in this final struggle he made for dominion. With his diminutive forces he kept the enemy at bay for several months; repeatedly defeated him in detached encounters; and at last caused such discouragement among the allied commanders, that they seriously debated the propriety of a retreat, and of evacuating the French territory. It is certain that but for the strenuous opposition of Alexander and Castlereagh, this pusillanimous project would have been followed, and, from the inevitable rupture of the Coalition that must have ensued, the ultimate triumph of Napoleon secured. As it was, an armistice was agreed on and concluded at Lusigny on the 24th February, by virtue of which the allies retired behind the Seine, which they had already passed, and Napoleon re-occupied the city of Troyes, where he put to death a M. Goualt, for having assumed the white cockade, the emblem of the old Bourbon race. Nevertheless the difficulties of his situation were growing daily more aggravated, from the wide-spread disaffection openly manifested against his government. The French had long luxuriated in the pleasures of conquest realised at the cost of other nations, but they were by no means prepared to suffer in their own persons the same devastating horrors they had inflicted. Now that the Emperor had only his own subjects to pillage in order to support his army, he aroused the identical feeling of exasperation amongst them which he had formerly so vehemently excited in foreign countries, and they sought every means of evading the requisitions he made upon them. They even preferred supplying the allied camp with provisions, for which they were in general paid; and this was particularly the case with regard to Wellington, who scrupulously abstained from every species of plunder, and who threatened to dismiss his Spanish auxiliaries if they persisted in retaliating upon the French their own injuries. Thus when the evils of war came with all their accumulated weight upon themselves, the French began to understand its baneful consequences, and in their ardent desire for peace, to regard with detestation the man who seemed the sole obstacle to its attainment. This sentiment was carefully fostered by the allies, who constantly avowed their desire to be at peace with France, but proclaimed the impossibility of concluding it with her present ruler. At the same time another antagonist element, even yet more important, came into operation against Napoleon, which, in the revolution it wrought upon the minds of men, materially aided in hurling him from his throne.

The brothers of Louis XVI. had been exiles in many distant lands since the outbreak of the Revolution; but latterly they had

taken refuge in England when no spot on the continent remained to afford them an asylum. They had been received with distinction by the court of the Prince Regent, but no pledge was given them as to a recognition of their pretensions to the throne of France. They had hitherto lived in seclusion—Louis, the eldest, occupying a country-seat in England called Hartwell; and Charles, his brother, the ancient palace of Holyrood at Edinburgh: but the probability of a change in the government of France naturally excited in them hopes of a restoration, and prompted them to bestir themselves. The Royalist cause had never been completely extinct in France, although under the glories and rigours of Napoleon's reign it had slumbered; and it was now revived in an extraordinary degree, both by the course of events, and by an eloquent appeal from the pen of Chateaubriand under the title of '*De Bonaparte et des Bourbons.*' In the south-west of France especially the feeling in favour of the Bourbons was extremely strong, and Wellington's success in that quarter was everywhere hailed with rapture. The city of Bordeaux took the lead in manifesting this feeling; and early in March, its authorities sent a formal application to the British general for his assistance, which he gave them by despatching to Bordeaux 12,000 men under Beresford. The Duke d'Angouleme, son of Charles Count d'Artois, who had recently joined Wellington's head-quarters, likewise proceeded to that city; and on the 12th March Louis XVIII. was solemnly proclaimed amid the enthusiastic cheers of all the inhabitants. A similar event occurred shortly after at Toulouse, when Wellington entered it subsequent to his victories over Soult at Tarbes and Toulouse, although, with his usual prudence and caution, the British commander avoided compromising himself or his government by any participation in these proceedings, since the allies were still treating with Napoleon. The capture of Lyons, the second city in the Empire, on the 20th March, by a detachment from the allied Grand Army, increased the fervour in favour of the Bourbons, demonstrating as it did the weakness of the Emperor and the hopelessness of his cause.

The firmness of Napoleon, however, was unshaken by all these sinister events. Relying too confidently perhaps on the refusal of the Emperor Francis to allow him to be dethroned, he rejected the ultimatum of the allies at the congress of Chatillon, by which France was to be reduced to her limits in 1792, and prepared with energy to resume the contest, nearly one-half of France being already in the hands of his enemies, who overmatched him in the proportion of at least four to one. But still he fought, and still he arrested them, rendering for ever famous in the annals of war the battle-fields of Champagne. With all his efforts, however it was impossible for him to expel them from

France; and notwithstanding the numerous checks he gave them, they kept gradually gaining ground. At length, after sustaining two severe engagements at Laon and Arcis-sur-Aube, he adopted the bold and original resolution of leaving Mortier and Marmont with 25,000 men to cover Paris, and of proceeding in person to the rear of the Allies, in order both to threaten their communications and to reinforce himself by the garrisons on the Rhine. He was aware of the nervous apprehension with which the allied, and particularly the Austrian commanders, regarded their communications, and he reckoned upon his movement at once inducing them to suspend their progress and follow him. In this expectation he was deceived, and the enterprise precipitated his ruin. Alexander, by the advice of his generals, resolved to advance immediately upon Paris; and in this proposal the king of Prussia warmly, Schwartzenberg tardily, concurred. Winzingerode was detached to observe the movements of Napoleon; and to the unutterable joy of the whole allied army, now swelled by the junction of Blucher, orders were issued on the 25th March to march on the capital. The two marshals were encountered on the way at Fere-Champenoise, and repulsed with great slaughter. Nothing further remained to stop the advance of the Allies, and on the evening of the 28th they came in sight of that famous city, which, more even than ancient Rome, fills history with its renown. The sovereigns ascended an eminence to feast their eyes with the splendid vision; the soldiers crowded after them, the ranks were broken, and enthusiastic cries of joy rent the air.

Meanwhile the deepest consternation prevailed in Paris itself. At a council of State, it was resolved that the Empress and the king of Rome should be removed, and their departure caused the deepest discouragement among the inhabitants. By some it was proposed to arm all the citizens, as in the palmy days of the Revolution; but fears of a Jacobin revulsion prevented the adoption of that step. The only measures, indeed, taken for the defence of Paris were strengthening Marmont and Mortier, who were stationed on the heights around the city, with some thousands of newly-mustered National Guards, and the planting of formidable batteries. But these were wholly insufficient to resist the assaults of the Allies, since there were no regular fortifications requiring a siege in form; and accordingly, although some severe fighting took place at Charenton, and on the heights of Montmartre, the marshals, by the express authority of King Joseph, agreed to a capitulation, by which they consented to evacuate the city; and Alexander, on the part of the Allies, undertook to protect all persons and property. On the following morning, the 30th of March, the allied sovereigns and troops entered Paris in all the array of military triumph; and such was the complete reaction in opinion, such the fickleness of the French people, that the most extraor-

dinary joy was manifested by the population at the appearance of the conquerors; and the women carried their fervour to such a pitch, that they embraced the feet of Alexander and his officers as they traversed the splendid line of the Boulevards. No cries were heard but those of *Vive l'Empereur Alexandre! Vivent les Bourbons!* And universally white banners were waved in the air and from the windows of the houses, whilst white cockades were worn in the breasts or on the hats of the spectators. The occasion could not have been one of more general rejoicing if it had been an army of Frenchmen returning in the pride of victory to claim the applause and welcome of their grateful countrymen!

The moment Napoleon learnt that the Allies had moved on Paris, he hastened with all speed to follow them, hoping to reach them before they got possession of the city. From the prompt capitulation of the marshals, however, he was too late, and the dismal intelligence of the fall of his capital was brought to him as he halted at a country inn not above twenty miles from Paris. He at first refused to believe the information, and insisted upon proceeding forward; but General Belliard at length came up with all the details of the catastrophe. Large drops of sweat stood on his brow as he listened to the recital; and at its close he turned to Caulaincourt, and said to him with a gaze that made him shudder, 'Do you hear that?' He then broke out into a furious tirade against his brother Joseph and the two marshals; after indulging in which for some time, he despatched Caulaincourt to treat with the Allies, giving him full powers to agree to any terms, and then retired to Fontainebleau. But the time had now passed for treating, as the Allies had come to a determination, and issued a proclamation to that effect, that they would no longer treat with Napoleon or any of his family. The Senate, moreover, had formally dethroned him, and appointed a provisional government, of which Talleyrand was president: this extreme measure being adopted upon a report drawn up by that same ignoble Fontanes who had been the habitual panegyrist of Napoleon since his first accession to power, and who now discovered that so terrible a despot, so ruthless an oppressor, so devastating a scourge to France and mankind at large, had never existed. The unfortunate Emperor sought to mitigate the blow by abdicating in favour of his son; but this compromise also was rejected, as it had been finally resolved to reinstate the Bourbons. Finding himself universally deserted, down even to his favourite domestics—all those who had enjoyed his highest favour, even Berthier himself, the constant companion of his bivouacks, flying from him with a baseness unparalleled in the records of ingratitude—he eventually signed his unqualified abdication on condition of being installed in the sovereignty of the isle of Elba, and of retaining his title of Emperor. After taking an affecting farewell of his old Guard

in the court of Fontainebleau, he set out for his destination, accompanied by commissioners representing the four principal allied powers; and so fiercely were the people exasperated against him, that on the route to Frejus, where he was to embark, he ran great danger of his life from popular violence; and during part of the journey, to avoid maltreatment, he travelled in the disguise of a courier, with a large white cockade on his breast.

Such was the sad exit from the great theatre of the world by the man who had attained higher destinies than had ever before fallen to the lot of mortal, and who, misusing the gifts so lavishly poured upon him, provoked a downfall equally striking and memorable with his career. And such, too, was the close of that Revolution, which, commencing auspiciously for the freedom and regeneration of men, had been speedily prostituted in blood, in its progress had extinguished all liberty, and in its development had outraged all the rights of nations, until the whole of a mighty continent arose, maddened by its crimes and its oppressions, to crush it and the guilty people who prospered through its enormities. In this day of her humiliation France reaped the inevitable fruit of a prolonged wickedness: in trembling abjectness she saw her capital in the hands of foreign conquerors, from whom she was reduced to receive the laws and the dynasty under which she was henceforth to be governed.



CHAPTER XVI.

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS—RETURN OF NAPOLEON FROM ELBA—
THE ONE HUNDRED DAYS—WATERLOO—APRIL 1814 TO JULY 1815.

The overthrow of Napoleon by no means led necessarily to the restoration of the Bourbons. Ideas of what was called 'legitimacy' were almost eradicated, and among the bulk of the generation rested on the faintest tradition. Consequently, the question as to the form of government to be assigned to France was one purely of expediency, and it was so exclusively considered by the sovereigns who had to decide it. They had uniformly proclaimed their desire to consult the wishes of the French people upon a subject so important to their welfare, and in this declaration they were perfectly sincere. Alexander especially, upon whom the decision mainly depended, was determined to act only upon undoubted indications of the prevailing sentiment. At the same time no idea of a republic was entertained: the deplorable failure of the previous experiment was

too vivid in recollection, and monarchical prepossessions also were too prevalent; hence the problem resolved itself into three hypotheses, enunciated by the Russian emperor in a council held at Talleyrand's hotel, at which many of the leading personages of France were present. The two great exigencies of the moment were, the security of internal order, and the preservation of external peace. The last of these objects was not compatible with the continuance of Napoleon himself on the throne, as by no limitations or guarantees was it possible to retain him in lengthened tranquillity. The first, on the other hand, could scarcely be expected under the reign of his infant son, with so weak and purely insignificant a personage as his mother, Maria-Louisa, for regent. Both might be combined only by the restoration of the ancient dynasty, for which indeed the sole expression of public feeling had been made. Consequently all suffrages were given in favour of this last alternative, accompanied by provisos for the establishment of a government based upon the principles of constitutional liberty. It was very far, therefore, from a resuscitation of the old monarchy that was intended; and what might seem singular in an absolute monarch, Alexander was the person who most strenuously insisted upon this stipulation of regulated freedom for the French nation. That prince had outlived his early enthusiasm for the independence and revival of nationalities infused by his republican preceptor La Harpe; but he was free from obsolete prejudices, and saw sufficiently clearly that no institutions could be permanent in France which were not based on a form, howsoever modified, of a national participation. The young Czar, moreover, aspired to play the part of a moderator in all the affairs of the world, and was doubtless intoxicated by the boundless flattery of the Parisians, who were never tired of extolling him, in varied guises of adulation, as 'the magnanimous Alexander.'

The Senate, so long the obsequious instrument of the deposed Emperor, had already pronounced his dethronement, and now presented itself as the fitting medium for appointing his successor. Thus the very subservience and abjectness of spirit which it had been the aim of Napoleon to encourage among the dignitaries of his Empire, was used with fatal efficacy against himself the moment he ceased to command their idolatry by the prestige of his predominance. Not in the most degenerate days of Rome was there displayed a more total want of public virtue, a more shameless abandonment of a falling to worship a rising power, than marked the present era in France, even among men who bore illustrious names gained in the rough fields of warfare. The defection of Marmont, in particular, at the head of 25,000 men, was the crushing blow to the fortunes of Napoleon; whilst that of Augereau, commanding the army

in the south of France, was marked by the indelible stain of a vituperative denunciation against his immortal chief, which has covered him with deserved opprobrium. The Act of Constitution promulgated by the Senate declared France a hereditary monarchy, and in the name of the French people called Louis-Stanislaus-Xavier, 'brother of the last king,' to occupy the throne. It contained articles, moreover, for securing a national legislature, freedom of the press, liberty of conscience, equality of taxation, and other guarantees of a constitutional government. All existing grades, both in the army and in the State were preserved, as well as endowments, pensions, and grants. This attention to the material interests springing out of the Revolution was in accordance with the views of the Allies, who were sensible that their consecration was indispensable to insure a general acquiescence in the new order of things. The measure was adopted by the Senate on the 7th April, and on the 12th, the Count d'Artois made his public entry into Paris as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, amidst the greetings of the assembled multitude. On the 20th, the new king left his retreat at Hartwell, and was received by the Prince-Regent in a solemn audience as king of France. On the 3d of May he reached his own capital, and entered it amidst the hearty acclamations of his recovered subjects, escorted by the Old Guard of Napoleon, and surrounded by the marshals of the Empire. He first proceeded to the cathedral of Nôtre-Dame, to offer a thanksgiving for his restoration; and then repaired to the palace of the Tuileries, of which he took possession as the legitimate owner. The Duchess d'Angouleme, daughter of Louis XVI., who accompanied him, was so affected when she entered the palace, which she had left under such terrible circumstances on the famous 10th of August 1792, that she sickened, and fell in a swoon at the feet of her uncle.

Thus the restoration of the Bourbons was in virtue of an implied election by the French people, upon which principle they were at first well content to resume the throne. But when this important point was secured, the old Royalists began to advance the loftiest pretensions of legitimacy, and claimed for Louis XVIII. an indefeasible right of inheritance. The Count d'Artois had resisted the exhortations of Talleyrand, and since his arrival at Paris, preserved a studied reserve touching the constitutional act of the Senate. The king himself, under the evil influence of the Count de Blacas, his confidential adviser, avowed his intention to annul it, notwithstanding the instances of Alexander to the contrary, who addressed him rather sharply on the subject. 'I have promised for your majesty,' the autocrat said to him, 'a free constitution, and I believe it is necessary for your reign. France requires two Chambers and a free press;

it is precisely what I propose to do for Poland: your majesty's good sense assures me of this concession.' But Louis was resolute in his determination not to confirm the act of the Senate; although, at the same time, he declared his willingness to take it as the basis of an intended Charter, and to secure by constitutional limitations the liberty of his subjects. This declaration, made at Saint-Ouen previous to his entry into Paris, was held to be satisfactory, chiefly through the intervention of Talleyrand, who played the part of mediator between the Constitutionalists and the Royalists, and was eventually carried into effect with perfect good faith; but thereby this important difference was established, that the king gave, of his own mere pleasure, franchises to his people: so ignoring the grand principle of the national sovereignty, on which the Revolution had first taken root and flourished. As a necessary corollary of this exploded assumption, flowed the yet more extravagant one of a succession by Divine right, and of a reign which had already existed for twenty years. Thus, as in England on the restoration of Charles II., when the great name of Cromwell was sought to be erased from the records of time, did these insensate princes aspire to obliterate the stupendous era of the Republic, to shroud in darkness the luminous glories of the Empire. Moreover, the pretension amounted actually to a breach of faith, since, although the feeling in favour of the restoration of the Bourbons was very general, and had been very unequivocally manifested, it took place in pursuance of an act of the Senate, adopted as the representative of the nation, and in pursuance more especially of the decision of the Allies, who could have very readily established the regency of Maria-Louisa, as was indeed wished by the emperor of Austria. Therefore the pretension was one of the most absurd possible, and proved that the Bourbons, as Napoleon said of them, had learnt no experience from their long adversity, but were still the same egregious fools as at the period of their pristine emigration. It gave rise to those early suspicions of their designs against the Revolution, which ripened speedily into convictions, and sent them forth again as fugitives ere they were yet warm on their usurped seat.

Nevertheless, Louis XVIII. was sufficiently intelligent to understand the exigencies of the times, albeit he doggedly refused to accede to them, save as emanating from his royal condescension. Thus he devolved the task of framing a constitution for France to a joint commission of the Senate and Legislative Body, which quickly accomplished the work; and on the 4th of June, the king held an extraordinary diet of the Chambers, in which he solemnly propounded it to them. He delivered a speech on this occasion, couched in suitable and affecting language, which elicited very gratifying acclamations; but he was followed by Dambray, the

chancellor and minister of justice, who spoke in a strain that excited violent inurmurs of disapprobation. He said, 'Senators and deputies, you have heard the touching words and paternal sentiments of his majesty; it remains for his ministers to make you the important communications resulting from them. He comes to confer on his people, exhausted by twenty-five years of calamities, the inestimable blessing of an honourable peace, and the equally precious one of an *ordinance of reformation*, by which he extinguishes all parties, as he maintains all rights. Many years have elapsed since Providence called our monarch to the throne of his fathers. *In full possession of his hereditary rights* over this noble kingdom, the king seeks only to exercise the authority *he holds from God and his fathers*, by himself placing limits to his power. It is he himself who gives the French a constitutional Charter, suited at once to their desires and their wants, and to the relative position of men and things.' Such language was the most injudicious that could be conceived, and to the men of the Revolution was absolutely revolting. Yet in itself the Charter contained very excellent provisions for the maintenance of public order and liberty. It assimilated the government of France as much as possible to that of Great Britain: an irresponsible king with responsible ministers; a Chamber of Peers nominated by the king; a Chamber of Deputies elected by qualified voters; freedom of the press within proper limits; liberty of conscience; equality of taxation: but it restricted the right of proposing laws to the crown, and likewise reserved to it the singular prerogative of 'making regulations and ordinances necessary for the execution of the laws and the safety of the State.' Such a power, it was evident, might be at any time used to alter or subvert existing institutions, since, from its very vagueness, it might be applied to any purpose. But with this and other imperfections, the Charter of Louis XVIII. was perhaps the best guarantee for a rational freedom that France had ever yet enjoyed; and it would have given universal satisfaction, but for the misplaced expressions with which it was accompanied, and the antiquated rights on which it professed to be founded.

But it is the spirit in which a government is conducted, or with which it is supposed to be actuated, that decides its general popularity more even than deeds. The Charter was accepted at the time as a prudent compromise between the anarchy of the Republic and the despotism of Napoleon, or of the old régime, more especially as it was accompanied by a general amnesty, and by a pledge of confirmation to the purchasers of national domains; but a feeling of discontent and suspicion speedily supervened from the general proceedings of the court. Louis XVIII. himself was really desirous of accommodating himself to the altered circumstances of the times, and of seeking to amalgamate the discordant elements of

Republicanism, Bonapartism, and Royalism; for at bottom he had a fund of great good sense and quick perception; but unfortunately he was by no means his own master. In the first place, the Count d'Artois exercised a pernicious influence, which paralysed all the sage intentions of the king. He put himself at the head of the Royalist party, and openly condemned the Charter, as an infringement upon his own rights as next heir to the throne. He assumed the old title of *Monsieur*, as eldest brother of the king, and sought in all things to restore the system in vogue before the Revolution, insomuch that among his partisans it was seriously discussed to place him at once on the throne, and depose Louis, unless the latter showed himself less of a *Jacobin*, as they styled him. In the next place, Louis was governed by Blacas, who held a ministerial office as intendant of the royal household, and who was one of the worst counsellors he could have suffered to guide him. This man was filled with all the old notions of the emigration, and held in undisguised horror all the events and actors of the Revolution. Hence he interposed between the king and those who might have tendered him sound advice and saved him from the commission of acts which alienated from him public opinion. Louis was anxious to obtain this advice, and especially from Barras and Fouché, the latter of whom stood high in his esteem as a man of ability and judgment. But from the absolute exclusion which had been imposed upon him of *regicides*, he durst not admit them to a personal interview, and therefore deputed Blacas to see and consult them. With both he had a long conference, but he was utterly incapable of comprehending their warnings or appreciating their counsels. Barras told him of the growing disaffection of the army, and of intrigues to seduce it from allegiance; Fouché exhorted him to induce the king to frankly embrace the Revolution rather than strive to discredit it, which would assuredly cause his ruin. From such a proposal Blacas recoiled with affright; and the result of the interview may be inferred from the remark of Fouché at its close—'Let the king continue to make use of this man,' he said, 'and he will cause him to lose ten crowns one after the other.'

In its conduct towards the army, the Bourbon government conducted itself with the greatest imprudence. It maintained all the imperial marshals and generals in their commands, but took away the colours under which they had so long fought and conquered. In suppressing the tricolour, and substituting in its stead the white flag, it inflicted a wound upon the sensibility of the meanest soldier, which caused him to blush with shame and anger. Many of the regiments refused to give up their standards, and preferred to burn rather than surrender them. Moreover, the numbers of the regiments were changed, and the recollections which connected them with fields of victory thus destroyed.

Other injudicious regulations were made, which gave umbrage to veterans who had been accustomed to the organisation of Napoleon, and who were prone to condemn any deviation from it. In addition to these causes of disaffection, not only was there no member of the Bourbon family capable of ingratiating himself with soldiers, but the entire absence of military qualities exposed them to their hatred and ridicule. Whilst the army was thus becoming estranged, the general public took alarm from the increasing indications of retrogression which were manifested by the court. Particularly the religious character affected by the Royalists, in contradistinction to the revolutionary infidelity, offended the prevailing taste, and gave rise to unfavourable surmises. The perpetual confluence of priests at the Tuileries, and the constant religious ceremonies performed, were so directly at variance with previous usage, as to attract disdainful notice, and provoke injurious sarcasms. The Order of St Louis was revived, which occasioned a rumour that the Legion of Honour was to be abolished; reports were continually spread of expressions used by those surrounding the royal family, pointing at a resumption of the national domains, and their transference to the dispossessed emigrants: the revival of extinct offices in the palace, and of the ancient etiquette observed at Versailles, awakened fears that soon the whole system of the old monarchy would be restored; in short, a general impression gained ground that although certain appearances were at present kept up, a settled intention existed of undoing all that the Revolution had effected, and of reverting absolutely to the government as constituted before its commencement. The very parsimony imposed upon Louis XVIII. by the disordered state of the finances created discontent, and added to the difficulties of his situation. Thus were prepared the elements of that revulsion of feeling which arose so strongly against the Bourbons, and which made them totter on their throne, liable to be upset by the least adverse gale, by the smallest accident of unpropitious import or aggressive opposition.

It was their misfortune, moreover, to be identified with the humiliation of France; and the treaty of Paris, concluded on the 30th May 1814—albeit more favourable to her than she had any reason to expect—was still quoted to their prejudice. By this treaty—contracted between Louis on the one hand, and Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Great Britain on the other—France was reduced to the limits she possessed on the 1st of January 1792, with some trifling accessions of territory towards Savoy, the Moselle and the Rhine; she recovered her lost colonies, with the exception of the Mauritius; and she surrendered to Holland two-thirds of the ships and frigates in the dockyards at Antwerp. No contributions were imposed on her even as indemnities for her

own exactions from other countries; and she was left in possession of all the spoils of art which Napoleon had removed to Paris: wherein was evinced the extreme desire of the Allies to reconcile the French people with the curtailment of their country to its old proportions, and to lead them to regard the Bourbons with affection, as the preservers of the national honour. The foreign armies forthwith commenced to evacuate France, and the allied sovereigns took their departure to visit England, where they were received with great rejoicings. It was stipulated that a congress of all the European powers should assemble at Vienna, to regulate the disposition of Europe after the numerous dislocations it had undergone; it being arranged, preliminarily, that Belgium should be annexed to Holland under the sovereignty of the House of Orange; that the German Confederation should be re-established; Switzerland be constituted independently; and Italy be partitioned as of yore. Malta, the original apple of discord, was conceded to England, who obtained, moreover, the protectorate of the Ionian Islands and the Cape of Good Hope. Such were the principal provisions of the treaty of Paris, negotiated on the part of France by Prince Talleyrand, on that of England by Lords Castlereagh and Aberdeen, on that of Russia by Counts Razumovsky and Nesselrode, on that of Prussia by Prince Hardenberg and Count Humboldt, on that of Austria by Prince Metternich and Count Stadion: all celebrated as the ablest diplomatists of their age.

And what had become of that mighty spirit whose work was thus rudely torn to pieces, his towering empire destroyed, and to crush whom all Europe had combined in arms? Chained on his verdant islet, he was still the same in the leading manifestations of his character. The same restless activity still continued to mark him. No sooner had he landed at Porto-Ferrajo, the capital of his new dominion, than he instantly set about planning all sorts of improvements—making roads, constructing aqueducts, working mines, and enlarging harbours. He scoured the little island in every direction with the rapidity which had characterised his longer journeys, and sighed impatiently when he reached its narrow bounds. Not that he chafed in spirit at the catastrophe which had pulled him from the throne of Europe, for he displayed great equanimity, and even cheerfulness of temper, but rest had become to him the most irksome of conditions. From the first depression which had prompted him at Fontainebleau to attempt to poison himself he had completely recovered, and talked complacently of his career being at an end, and of himself as politically extinct. The death of his beloved Josephine, which occurred shortly after his abdication, and the desertion of Maria-Louisa, who preferred the enticement of the Duchy of Parma to the glory of partaking his exile, were the

only subjects which affected him deeply. His mother and sister Pauline came to reside with him, and he formed a court around him, with all the mimic splendour he could command. By his treaty with the Allies he was to enjoy an income of £100,000 sterling a year, payable from the French treasury, which the Bourbon government, to its disgrace, allowed to fall in arrear, so that he suffered greatly from the pressure of pecuniary difficulties. He had an armed force of 700 infantry and 80 cavalry, chiefly composed of veterans from his Old Guard, whom he kept continually reviewing and exercising in manœuvres, particularly in throwing shells, a practice in which he took great delight. Having three small gun-brigs at his disposal likewise, he planned, with characteristic purpose, an expedition to seize and occupy a small uninhabited island called Rianosa, which lay in the immediate vicinity of Elba; and to execute this bold design he gravely despatched thirty grenadiers and ten of the native islanders, taking as much interest in the tiny enterprise as if he were again on the Niemen with his Grand Army of half a million of warriors!

Whilst thus apparently absorbed in the concerns of his Lilliputian empire, it is not to be supposed that he was indifferent to the progress of affairs in France. The errors and difficulties of the Bourbon government awakened in him hopes of subverting it, which were strengthened by the constant communications he received from his numerous partisans. The Allies could scarcely have selected a situation more favourable for prosecuting such a design than the island of Elba, lying off the coast of Italy, and within easy sail of France. It is true they had sent commissioners to watch him; but these were ultimately withdrawn, with the exception of Sir Neil Campbell, who remained on the part of Great Britain, but in an anomalous capacity, which left him without authority or force to interfere with his actions. Consequently no impediment whatever stood in the way of his maintaining the most active correspondence both with France and with Murat in Naples, who had begun to entertain just apprehensions that the Congress of Vienna intended to deprive him of his kingdom, which he had sought by a dishonourable defection to retain. Napoleon was thus kept acquainted with the minutest events that occurred in France; and during the autumn and winter of 1814, the project of his descent on the coast of France, simultaneously with the advance of Murat to the north of Italy, was seriously discussed. Many things promised a successful issue to such an enterprise. The Bourbons were daily growing more unpopular, daily showing themselves more incompetent to understand the exigencies of their position. They were like men suddenly transported into a new world, of which they knew neither the forms nor the customs. In ideas, in manners, even in dress, they were alien to the nation

they had been called to govern: not a single prestige did they bear about them to kindle the attachment or devotion of a generation to whom the impulse of mere loyalty was wholly unknown. Besides, were they not seated on the throne by the agency of foreign bayonets, although something like a national acquiescence had been given to their restoration? On the other hand, in how grand a contrast did Napoleon appear? The calamities he had inflicted on France by his wars were forgotten, or rather attributed to the existing government, which invariably incurs the blame and odium of public misfortunes. His great exploits only were remembered: the grandeur to which he had raised France; the degradation into which she had fallen when she lost him; the glory he had shed on his country; the renown with which he filled the world; the vastness of the reverse which had hurled him from the pinnacle of human greatness. In their idle garrisons the soldiers talked of his victories until they wept with grief; they compared him to his successor, the gross, unwieldy, gouty Louis, and asked how they could exchange him for such a master; they recalled his endearing epithet of *Le Petit Caporal*, and burned with enthusiasm as they gazed on the portrait of his well-known features.

Meanwhile the Congress had commenced its sittings at Vienna towards the close of September. It included the representatives of Russia, Prussia, Austria, France, England, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, and the Pope. The lesser powers had envoys present likewise, but they were not admitted to take part in the conferences. The task of the Congress was the most weighty and extraordinary that ever fell to the lot of diplomatists to accomplish. The whole question of the territorial reconstruction of Europe was at issue; and although great seeming friendship and cordiality existed among the sovereigns and ministers, the widest differences, the utmost discordance, in reality, prevailed among them. The magnitude of the prizes for distribution had aroused the most violent cupidity, and drew to the exciting theatre of action most of the European potentates in person: together with the emperors of Austria and Russia, and the king of Prussia, were the kings of Denmark, Bavaria, and Wurtemberg, and a perfect swarm of German princes. The principal points that arose in dispute had reference to Poland and Saxony. Alexander demanded the entire Duchy of Warsaw, as it had been constituted by Napoleon, to be erected into a separate kingdom, or united with Russia. Frederick-William, on his part, claimed the whole of Saxony, to be annexed to his recovered dominions. To these demands of Russia and Prussia, who acted in close concert, Austria, England, and France opposed a steady resistance; and as the former insisted on a compliance, warm altercations took place. From these the parties passed to warlike preparations, and everything foreboded a renewal of

the war, from the rapacity of the coalesced powers in sharing among them the spoils they had won. France, England, and Austria concluded a secret treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, on the 3d February 1815, and the Congress was on the point of being dissolved, when a startling event cemented among its members their pristine union, and hastened the adjustment of their differences. Concessions were made on both sides, a treaty was rapidly framed, and all the powers joined in a common denunciation against that foe who had so long and often made them tremble; for to their consternation it was announced to them that Napoleon had landed in France!

This momentous event had in fact occurred at Cannes, in the Gulf of St Juan, on the afternoon of the 1st of March. It had been hastened by the exhortations of his correspondents, who represented to him the danger of the government being upset by a republican outbreak, owing to the general dissatisfaction with the Bourbons, which would render his return a matter of greater difficulty. It would have been better for him, however, if he had delayed the enterprise for a few weeks, when the Allies would probably have been at war among themselves, or at least their armies far removed from France, and reduced from a war footing. He disembarked with 1100 soldiers, accompanied by Generals Bertrand, Cambronne, and Drouot, and after halting for the night at Cannes, he proceeded the next day by Gap to Grenoble. On his way he distributed proclamations fitted to win the population, and particularly the army, to his cause. He said he had come to restore the liberty of 1790; to secure all the results of the Revolution; to uphold the proprietors of the national domains threatened by the Bourbons; to hoist again the national colours; to obtain an equality of rights for all. It was not until he approached Grenoble that he met any troops to oppose his progress. These were a detachment from the garrison of that city; and the success or failure of the undertaking in a great measure depended on their conduct. Napoleon advanced in front of them, and cried out, 'Comrades, do you know me again?' 'It is *Le Petit Caporal!*' exclaimed one of the men. 'I am your comrade and your emperor,' Napoleon again said: 'fire on me if you wish; here is my bosom;' and he laid bare his breast. With one accord the soldiers rushed forward, embraced his knees with tears of effusion, and raised again with impassioned shouts the cherished invocation of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' The whole garrison of Grenoble, with Labedoyere at its head, immediately joined his standard, and henceforth his progress was a triumphant march. The soldiers everywhere revolted to him, and he entered Lyons on the 12th March, whither the Count d'Artois had vainly repaired, in hopes to stimulate the fidelity of the troops. Here he issued several decrees dissolving the Chambers, and virtually taking possession

of the government, but with professions of a most liberal tendency; and he prepared a fresh proclamation to the army, couched in that heart-stirring language which he, of all commanders, has known best how to address to soldiers.

‘Soldiers!’ he said, ‘we have not been conquered! Two men,* sprung from our ranks, have betrayed our laurels, their country, their prince, their benefactor. Shall those whom we have seen during twenty years scour every part of Europe to raise up opponents against us; who have passed their lives in enemies’ camps uttering execrations against our noble France; shall they pretend to command us, to enchain our eagles—they who have so often quailed beneath their glance? Shall we suffer them to reap the fruits of our glorious labours—to take possession of our honours, of our effects, to calumniate your glory? Soldiers! in my exile I have heard your voice. I have come hither, through all perils, despite all obstacles. Your general, called to the throne by the voice of the people, and elevated on your bucklers, is restored to you. Come and join him; come and range yourselves under the standards of your chief: he has no existence but in yours; his interest, his honour, his glory, are no other than yours.’

Intelligence of Napoleon’s landing had been conveyed to Paris by telegraph on the 3d of March. It had naturally excited a prodigious sensation. Blacas and the Royalists affected to make light of it, and boasted they would soon have ‘the brigand’ brought in chains to the capital. But Louis himself had a juster notion of the danger, and felt the deepest alarm. He had for some time experienced great uneasiness at the evidently unsettled state of the public mind, and had anxiously sought explanations from Blacas. That infatuated personage had, however, no misgivings; on the contrary, he was filled with a radiant confidence. He reported to the king, ‘Since the return of your majesty, the religious and monarchical spirit has made a very sensible progress; whoever had seen Paris and France under the tyrant, and saw them now since his fall, could scarcely believe himself in the same country. Love of the Bourbons is in all hearts; every trace and remembrance of Bonaparte is gradually effaced; the churches are filled with the faithful. With the exception of certain disturbers, who can be easily got rid of, the officers and soldiers are personally devoted to your majesty and the princes of your family. The Royalist spirit makes great progress in the provinces, and by successively modifying the functionaries, we shall attain a direction truly monarchical. There are alarmists, who, to gain credit with your majesty, suppose imaginary dangers: the love of the French is secured to your august house; and who could rise against the descendant of

* He meant Marshals Marmont and Mortier, who surrendered Paris.

so many kings, against the son of St Louis and Henry IV.?' With such ridiculous language did this most incompetent minister seek to lull his unfortunate master into a false security, and blind him to the perilous predicament in which he stood—a thing more easily to be done, inasmuch as Louis XVIII. was sensitively averse to hear bad news, and always said to any one who obtruded on him unpleasant tidings, 'Could you not have kept that quiet? I shall know it soon enough.' But in the present emergency the king judged more soundly than his ministers what course it behoved him to take, and resolved to throw himself on the nation. With this view he forthwith convoked the Chambers, and repaired in person to open their session. He was accompanied by the Count d'Artois, who had reluctantly consented to pronounce a public adhesion to the Charter. Although Louis XVIII. was of enormous corpulence—the result of excessive eating—he had a countenance and mien of considerable dignity, and spoke with great fluency and elegance. In the choice of language he had indeed an exquisite taste, and justly prided himself on the finished structure of his sentences. He thus addressed the assembled legislators on this solemn occasion:—'I have been restored to my country; I have reconciled it with all the foreign powers, who, no doubt can exist, will be faithful to the treaties which have insured us peace. I have laboured to promote the happiness of my people; I have received, and receive daily, the most touching proofs of their attachment; at sixty years of age, could I better terminate my career than by dying in their defence? I fear nothing, therefore, for myself, but I tremble for France. He who comes to light up amongst us the flames of civil war, brings likewise with him the scourge of a foreign war; he comes to reduce again our country under his yoke of iron; he comes, in fine, to destroy that Constitutional Charter I have given you—that Charter, my best title in the eyes of posterity—that Charter which all Frenchmen cherish, and which I here swear to maintain.' Rapturous acclamations greeted this appropriate harangue, since the Liberals or Constitutionals, headed by Benjamin Constant, had resolved to support the king, wisely judging that liberty was totally inconsistent with the temper and system of Napoleon. The effect was inexpressibly heightened when the Count d'Artois stepped forward and advanced to the throne. 'Sire,' he said, addressing the king, 'I know that I infringe the ordinary rules in speaking before your majesty, but I intreat you to excuse me, and permit me here to express, in my own name and in that of my family, how perfectly we share, in the bottom of our hearts, the sentiments and principles which animate your majesty.' Then turning to the assembly, the prince added, raising his hand, 'We swear on our honour to live and die faithful to our king and to the Constitutional Charter which assures the welfare of the French.' A spon-

taneous response was given to this oath; the king stretched out his hand to the prince, who kissed it with tenderness; then the two brothers embraced, and the sitting terminated amidst shouts of enthusiasm and gratulation.

For a time appearances wore a favourable aspect, corresponding with this cheering scene in the Chamber of Deputies. Innumerable addresses were presented to the king, in which he was assured of the steadfast loyalty of the French: the marshals, and all the dignitaries of the State, waited on him to tender their support and allegiance. Soult, who had been created minister of war, issued a vehement proclamation to the army, in which he denounced Napoleon in unmeasured terms, and stigmatised his enterprise as equally wicked and insane. Ney accepted the command of the troops concentrating at Lons-le-Saulnier to arrest the invasion; and at his audience, on taking leave, he said to Louis, 'Sire, I will bring back Bonaparte in an iron cage.' 'Good-by, marshal!' replied the monarch; 'I rely on your honour and fidelity.' These words of Ney inspired a boundless confidence, and diffused through the court overweening joy. Alas! the exultation was destined to be brief. Ney, the most intrepid and dauntless of warriors, was weak and irresolute in character, and wholly unable to withstand the seductions of his old commander and benefactor. As he proceeded towards Lyons, he found the feeling almost universal in favour of Napoleon: the soldiers, the National Guards, the country people, all declared for him: Ney himself no doubt had a secret predilection for one he had so long served and fought under; within a week of his declaration to the king, he gave up the cause of the Bourbons as hopeless, and went over to the side of the Emperor. He justified his defection in a proclamation to his soldiers, in which he told them that the cause of the Bourbons was irrecoverably lost, and that the 'august Napoleon' was the legitimate sovereign of France. This document he read to the troops himself on the morning of the 14th amidst enthusiastic cries of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' Hats were thrown into the air, sabres waved, vows pledged, banners raised; an intoxicating exuberance animated all breasts, and the doom of the Bourbons was indeed sealed.

After this flagrant treason on the part of Ney, which entailed the revolt of the whole army, no obstacle interposed to prevent the approach of Napoleon to Paris. He advanced accordingly with great rapidity, and on the 19th he reached Fontainebleau, a place which recalled to him many tender recollections. It became immediately necessary for Louis to determine what course he should adopt. To defend Paris was out of the question, as it was ascertained that not even the National Guards could be in the least degree relied upon. Yet Louis was very averse to leave the capital, as it was tantamount to an abandonment of the throne. A suggestion was offered that he and the Chambers

should sit in permanence, and receive the conqueror, who, it was supposed, would not venture to violate the national legislature. But the consideration of Napoleon's character speedily dispelled so purely vain a hallucination; his conduct towards the Duke D'Enghien was called to mind; and the unhappy Louis resigned himself to the last sad alternative. At midnight on the 19th he set out on his melancholy journey, and retired to Lille, where he proposed to remain; but finding himself not safe from the hostility of the garrison, he sorrowfully quitted France altogether, and repaired to Ghent. His fortunate rival succeeded him at the Tuileries on the night of the 20th. A large concourse of officers was assembled to welcome his arrival. The moment his carriage drove into the court the door was forced open, and he carried out in the arms of those nearest to it. He was thus borne by the crowd into the vestibule, up the staircase, and into the grand saloon, where a number of ladies awaited him. Here a scene ensued which is not to be told in words. The women pressed around him, kissed his cheeks, his hands, his clothes, with passionate eagerness; the men filled the air with cries of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' raising in their hands bunches of violet; the Emperor himself was overcome with his emotions, and almost wept from excess of joy. In the musings of his future solitude he recurred with transport to this ravishing hour, and pronounced it to be the happiest in his life.

This astounding resumption of a throne from which he had been within a year almost unanimously and ignominiously expelled, whilst it filled the world with amazement, excited at the same time a boundless indignation throughout Europe. The Emperor Alexander, in particular, was extremely incensed, since it was from his sympathy more especially that Napoleon had been placed in an independent sovereignty, and he judged his return an intolerable breach of faith. A convention was immediately entered into by all the great powers, afterwards acceded to by the minor states, wherein they agreed to take up arms against him as a public disturber of the peace of nations; and they promulgated a manifesto to that effect. They contemplated employing an overwhelming mass of forces to accomplish his destruction, which they openly avowed to be their aim: four large armies were intended to invade France on her eastern and northern frontiers—one under Schwartzenberg, of 260,000 men, by the Upper Rhine; one under Blücher, of 150,000 men, by the Lower Rhine; one under Wellington, of 120,000 men, by Flanders; and a fourth under Barclay de Tolly, composed of Russians, counting 170,000 combatants, was to follow the others as an army of reserve. It was proposed to operate at the same time with lesser armies both on the Alps and on the Pyrenees, so that altogether an array of nearly 850,000 men was to be mustered against the realm of France, which had thought fit to receive again as its sovereign

the proscribed man of battles. Great Britain had, as usual, to provide the subsidies necessary for putting in motion such enormous bodies of men; and as in the preceding year, she furnished to her allies nearly £12,000,000 sterling, each power receiving from her a sum in proportion to the contingent it supplied to the general armament. So apparently inexhaustible were the financial resources of this country, that after a war of a quarter of a century, it supported an expenditure of above £120,000,000 sterling for the year 1815: an unparalleled drain upon a community, which would have sunk any other on the earth into an abyss of ruin. The colossal magnitude of these preparations struck even the daring mind of Napoleon with dismay, and he made sundry fruitless efforts to open negotiations. But the Allies were steadfast and unanimous in repudiating his overtures. They refused indeed even to receive them; and when a secret agent contrived to penetrate to the ear of Alexander, that monarch retorted angrily, 'We can have no peace with Napoleon. It is a mortal strife betwixt us: he has broken his word. I am freed from my engagement. Europe requires an example.' Metternich used the same language on the part of Austria, who alone might have been accessible to advances in favour of her own son-in-law; and Napoleon had the unalterable assurance that he must look to himself and the attenuated army of France alone to uphold the existence of his newly-won dominion.

But it was not so much the external danger threatening him that gave Napoleon the greatest uneasiness at the first moments of his accession; it was the internal state of France which caused him the chief embarrassment. After the first intoxication of his return, the difficulties of his situation stood in glaring hideousness before his eyes. Apart from the army, the nation at large was far from being enthusiastic in his cause. For the most part it was either indifferent or hostile, although the Royalist movements in the south and west, whither the Duke and Duchess of Angouleme had repaired, were speedily suppressed; the certainty of a renewed war with Europe, and the probability of the country being again overrun by hordes of foreign soldiers, occurred with appalling vividness to the general apprehension. It was necessary for him, therefore, to enlist other sympathies in his behalf other than those peculiar to himself; and no better resource presented itself than to stir up the old revolutionary fervour of '93, which of all things was to him the most abhorrent. For this purpose it behoved him to call to his aid the man whom he most thoroughly detested in the world, and whom he knew to be an arch knave, unworthy of reliance. This was Fouché, his old minister of police, who had always maintained relations with the Jacobin party even when in office, and whom his extensive acquaintance with all manners and classes of men made at the moment the most important personage in France. Of his great influence he was well

aware, and he almost dictated to Napoleon the course of conduct he should pursue. The nation would suffer no relapse to despotism, he said; the most ample guarantees must be given of a free constitution, otherwise no support would be obtained to the government. The Emperor confessed this necessity, but maintained that the question of a constitution should be postponed to that of the national defence, as the latter was the more imperative. Herein each was desirous of playing his own part: if the war was to be the leading consideration, Napoleon would be invested with absolute power, and if ultimately successful, might regulate the constitution to be given pretty much as he liked; whereas if the civil government were to be first settled, Fouché would be master of the position, and have Napoleon more or less under his control. However galling to a spirit like his to succumb before such a man as Fouché, Napoleon was eventually obliged to do so, and it was agreed that a constitution should be at once proclaimed and put in force, whilst to the Emperor should be allotted the exclusive care of superintending the military preparations. Fouché assumed his former post of minister of police, and Carnot, the ex-director, an avowed Republican, was appointed minister of the interior, with the special function of organising the National Guards. Much difficulty was experienced in filling the other ministries, from the disinclination of parties to accept them: a foreboding index of opinion, and one peculiarly rare in France. Even Cambacères and Caulaincourt refused to take office under a government they regarded as doomed, and only consented upon the emphatic injunction of Napoleon. Under such lowering aspects did this closing era of his career progress, which is celebrated in history under the indistinctive title of *THE HUNDRED DAYS*.

What constitution was possible, what compatible, with the existing state of things, and with the notorious propensities of the Emperor? Herein lay a perplexity almost insoluble. To Fouché and the revolutionary party the more democratic form was agreeable; to Napoleon the more vague and concentrated as to executive authority. To strike the balance was the essential difficulty. An emperor there was to be, but with what restrictions on his power! Such was the extraordinary problem adumbrated, and in its consideration the anomalous position of Napoleon was apparent. By character he was a military chief and dictator; in any other capacity he was out of place, and most of all in that of a constitutional monarch. Yet to the force of circumstances he was fain to yield; and a constitution was framed in accordance with the views of Fouché and Carnot. But Napoleon availed to have it promulgated under the singular title of an 'Additional Act to the Constitutions of the Emperor,' by which it was made to emanate, like Louis XVIII.'s Charter, solely from himself, and might by the same authority be modified or abrogated. On this account, and also from its provisions, it gave general dissatisfaction to the Repub-

licans, whilst by the Royalists it was derided as a mere copy of the royal Charter. This it in reality was, with very slight variations: it established two Chambers, one of Peers, and one of Representatives; the first to be named by the Emperor, and the latter chosen in the existing electoral colleges; and it conferred the privileges of a free press, equality of taxation, and other rights specified in the Charter. Hence it was evident that France had gained nothing by the expulsion of the Bourbons and the restoration of Napoleon, save the exchange of a quiet and peaceable monarch for an ambitious and warlike one. This negative result struck all minds, and evinced the impossibility of compounding a mixed government in France out of the heterogeneous elements left by the Revolution with any chance of stability. After so many changes and fluctuations, the nation was so completely unsettled, that no form of government could command general contentment, or obtain a more than temporary acquiescence. Such is the bitter fruit of that revolutionary spirit which overleaps the bounds of moderation, and can never again subside into that blessed calmness wherein lies the happiness of nations, but bequeaths turbulence as its accursed inheritance to generation after generation.

However nugatory his constitution might be, either as an improvement or as a permanent work, nevertheless Napoleon determined to sanctify it before the nation in a manner calculated to insure the semblance of a universal approbation, and stimulate the spirit of patriotism. With this view he convoked an assembly of delegates from all the departments, together with deputations from the army and navy, to be held on the Champ de Mars, after the precedent of the Federation in 1790. Likening it to the military and legislative assemblages of the Franks, he called this convocation a *Champ de Mai*, and it was appointed to be held on the 1st of June.* Indefatigable exertions were made to render the ceremony as imposing as possible. Tiers of seats were reared around the ample plain, capable of accommodating two hundred thousand spectators. In the midst four thousand delegates were ranged, the representatives of united France. In dense array military and naval deputations stood to represent the defenders of the country. All the marshals and dignitaries of the Empire appeared with splendid retinues. The Emperor himself was apparelled with magnificence, and attended by his brothers Joseph and Lucien, the latter of whom had again joined him. He addressed the immense assemblage in an animated speech, in which he declared himself the instrument of the French people to secure their liberty and redeem their honour. He professed his love of peace, but announced that the powers who sought to en-

* He had originally intended this Champ de Mai for the coronation of the Empress and the king of Rome, who he pretended were coming to join him, with the view of deceiving the French as to the hostility of the emperor of Austria.

slave France were bent upon war. He avowed the country was in peril, but by union and energy it would be rescued. The powers pretended to wage war only against him, and if it were so, he would cheerfully sacrifice himself to propitiate their hatred; but it was against France their hostility was directed, and with the prosperity, honour, and glory of France he was wholly identified. At the conclusion of his oration he placed his hand on a copy of the Evangelists, and took an oath to observe the Constitution. In this he was followed by his brothers, marshals, and ministers, after which all present raised their hands and repeated the formula of adjuration. The ceremony was concluded by a distribution of eagles to numerous regiments of the army, amidst that excitement and fervour which Napoleon never failed to impart in martial solemnities.

The new Chambers had been appointed to meet on the 4th June. A list of peers had been drawn out by Napoleon, comprising upwards of one hundred names, most of whom had been members of the former Senate, and were therefore wholly devoted to him. The Chamber of Representatives was actuated by a different spirit. Elected under the Jacobin influence, the members were, or at least the great majority of them, deeply tinged with a Republican hue, and positively hostile to the Emperor. They claimed the right of revising and amending his *Acte Additionel*, which he felt constrained to confirm to them, and it was certain they would enlarge it in a very liberal manner. By their election of a president they sufficiently showed the extent of their opposition. In preference to Prince Lucien, the government candidate, they appointed Lanjuinais, the old Girondin, who was personally obnoxious to Napoleon, from his being concerned in promoting the decree of the Senate against him the previous year. The appointment was subject to his approbation, and he was so incensed that he refused to give it, but said that he would send his answer by a chamberlain. The Chamber was not disposed to tolerate this treatment, and insisted upon an immediate reply from himself; and he was again compelled to yield. From these repeated involuntary compliances, it is clear that, under certain circumstances, the firmest and most imperious of monarchs must submit to the demands of their subjects, and that even Napoleon could not offer a more effectual resistance than Louis XVI. himself, who has been so censured for his weakness and vacillation. Notwithstanding this manifest alienation on the part of the Representatives, Napoleon opened the legislative session with a speech, in which he expressed his reliance on their confidence, energy, and patriotism in seconding his efforts to save the independence of the country, and challenged their cordial assistance in the name of that liberty he was about to defend. He was received coldly, and with but partial cheers. The Representatives evinced their sentiment of suspicion against

him in their address, wherein they frankly told him they would take the Constitution into consideration, with a view to the remedy of its defects, and warned him that the nation wished for no aggrandisement but simply to be happy and free. He retorted by a strong eulogium upon the Constitution, which he recommended to their especial reverence 'as the only polar star in the storm,' and reciprocated their warning by advising them not to imitate the Greeks of the Lower Empire, who applied themselves to the discussion of abstract questions when the battering-rams of the barbarians were thundering at their walls, and had thereby incurred the ineffable ridicule of all posterity.

These untoward dissensions between the Emperor and his parliament, on the eve of his departure to join the army, were of evil augury for France. They showed but too evidently in how deplorable a predicament she was really involved. If Napoleon were successful in war, not a doubt existed that he would run his sword through the parchment Constitution, and resume the nearest approach to his former despotism he could realise. On the other hand, if he were unsuccessful, she had the dire fate before her of being plunged into absolute anarchy, or of being conquered by enemies who would not again overlook her delinquencies, but would inflict on her the last measure of punishment. In addition to these inherent causes of discouragement, was the treachery of men holding high places in the government, and particularly of Fouché, who maintained a correspondence both with Wellington and with Metternich. His intercourse with the latter was discovered, and Napoleon proposed to have him shot. Carnot condemned the proposal, saying to him, 'You may shoot Fouché to-day, but to-morrow you will cease to reign. The men of the Revolution permit you to retain the throne only on condition that you respect their liberties. They account Fouché one of their strongest guarantees. If he is guilty, he must be legally proceeded against.' It is an extraordinary proof at once of Fouché's great ascendancy at this critical moment, and of Napoleon's precarious position, that the Emperor was not only obliged to forego the idea of punishing him, but, with the full knowledge of his treachery, to leave in his hands the internal administration of the country. The only expedient he could adopt in security was to impress on his mind the impolicy of betraying him. Before leaving Paris he bespoke his attendance, and said to him, 'Like persons who are ready to die, we have nothing to conceal from each other: if I fall, the patriots fall with me; you will play your game ill if you betray me. With me all you Revolutionists will perish under the Bourbons; I am your last dictator: reflect on that.' The artful traitor did reflect on it perhaps; but so inveterate were his habits of intrigue, that he still continued his communications with Wellington, and even forwarded him accounts of

the military movements and preparations ordained by Napoleon. There are few instances in history of so truly vile a miscreant as Fouché gaining predominance over men, and it may be received as an indication how low the French character must have sunk at this period, that he, of all others, should have been the most influential personage in the country at so momentous an epoch in its annals.

Napoleon set out from Paris at one in the morning of the 12th of June, to enter upon that brief and decisive campaign which terminated his career. Notwithstanding the great reduction that had been made in the army by the Bourbon government, under which it was cut down to 100,000 men, he had contrived in the three months of his reign, by dint of those indefatigable exertions of which he above all men was capable, to at least double its number. Besides the regular army, Carnot was busily engaged in organising a force of 100,000 National Guards to preserve internal tranquillity, suppress revolt, and be used in case of necessity for the defence of the country from invasion. As a further precaution, Paris and Lyons were both fortified by immense lines of intrenchments, the Emperor justly appreciating the value of strong central fortifications to fall back upon in the event of disaster, and the want of which had materially contributed to facilitate his ruin in 1814. The forces he was enabled to bring into the field were much more considerable than the Allies had believed him capable of mustering. They amounted in the whole to nearly 250,000 men, and were thus distributed. The main army, intended to act in Flanders under his own command, was assembled between the Meuse and the Sambre, and numbered 130,000 combatants, with 350 pieces of cannon. On the Rhenish frontier, with his head-quarters at Strasburg, Rapp commanded three divisions consisting of nearly 20,000 men; towards Savoy Suchet had a corps of observation 22,000 strong; from 50,000 to 60,000 men were employed in La Vendée and other districts where Royalist outbreaks had occurred, which, although repressed for the moment, might at any time be renewed. Thus his offensive strength, insignificant as it was in comparison with that of the Allies, was still further crippled by the necessity of keeping his domestic enemies in check, whilst he sought to repel the foreign foes who had vowed his destruction. His plan of operations was dictated by the exigencies of his situation. If he waited until all the allied armies were prepared to enter France, he could scarcely hope to resist their overwhelming superiority of force; therefore it behoved him to strike a preliminary blow, and by a startling achievement confound his adversaries, overawe their aggressive energy, and perchance avail to dissolve their coalition. The great Austrian and Russian armies were still on their march; Blucher and Wellington alone had collected their forces, and were prepared to enter on the cam-

paign. The first occupied cantonments extending from Liege on the Meuse to Nivelles, and had under his command 110,000 men, almost all Prussians and veterans who had fought in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814. The latter had his head-quarters at Brussels, and his army, amounting to about 80,000 men fit for active duty, of whom scarcely 40,000 were British, was distributed from that city to Oudenarde on the Scheldt on an elongated line stretching thirty miles from west to east. Their design was to defer an offensive movement until Schwartzenberg had crossed the Rhine; and whilst lying thus disseminated and separated, they offered to Napoleon the opportunity he was ever intent to embrace—of interposing between them, and defeating them in succession. If he could conceal his intentions from them, and take them by surprise, he had every prospect of succeeding in his scheme, and of dissipating two of the hostile arrays before the others could arrive on the scene of action to aid in the combined enterprise.

Notwithstanding the well-known characteristics of Napoleon in warfare—his egregious daring and promptitude—the two allied generals reposed in supine confidence, never imagining that he would assume the offensive with so inferior an aggregate of force. At the same time they had made arrangements for concentrating their armies at the shortest notice—the British upon Mons, the Prussian upon Namur, to co-operate in their contemplated invasion; but relying upon information from Paris as to the real intentions of the Emperor, they continued in their scattered cantonments, unaware of his having joined the army, and of its being completely concentrated opposite Charleroi and Fleurus, on a line of less than four miles in extent. This information Fouché had forwarded, intrusting a despatch intended for Wellington written in cipher to a female, who, with the astute policy of an archtraitor, he ordered should be detained on the frontier; so that however events might turn out, he could boast his secret sympathy with the conqueror.* All his combinations being

* This fact, which would be otherwise incredible, Fouché himself relates with unblushing audacity. In the *Memoirs* published under his name, he says, 'Napoleon had the more reason to expect the success of his plan, inasmuch as Wellington, deceived by false reports, believed that the opening of the campaign might be deferred until the beginning of July. His success, therefore, depended on a surprise, and I arranged my plans in conformity. On the very day of his departure from Paris, I despatched Madame D—, furnished with notes written in cipher, containing the whole plan of the campaign. But at the same time I privately transmitted orders for such obstacles to be opposed to her on the frontier where she was to pass, that she could not arrive at the head-quarters of Wellington until after the event. This is the real explanation of the inconceivable security of the British general, which at the time excited such universal astonishment.'—Vol. ii. p. 342. It may be remarked that Wellington disclaims having had any communications with Fouché at this period, although he acknowledges he received information from Paris on which he could rely, and there seems every reason to infer that, unknown to him, such information emanated from the perfidious minister of police.

matured, Napoleon passed his army over the Sambre at daybreak on the 15th June, and advancing against Ziethen, who commanded the Prussian vanguard at Charleroi, drove him back on Fleurus. Intelligence of this attack was with all speed conveyed to Blücher, who was at Namur, and who issued immediate orders for the concentration of his army behind Fleurus, between Brie and Sombreffe, which, with the exception of Bulow's corps, stationed between Liege and Hannut, in the rear, was effected on the night of the 15th. The startling tidings did not reach Wellington at Brussels until the afternoon of that day; and he lost not a moment in directing the concentration of his troops on Quatre Bras, the point of communication between him and Blücher; after which hasty orders he repaired, with a cool and unaltered countenance, to a ball given by the Duchess of Richmond that same evening, to which he and his principal officers had been previously invited. Meanwhile Napoleon prosecuted his attack with all the indomitable ardour for which he was so remarkable. Detaching Ney with 45,000 men to seize the all-important post of Quatre Bras, by the possession of which he would completely sever the two armies of his enemy, he proceeded in person at the head of 70,000 men to assail the Prussians, who had taken up a strong position at St Amand and Ligny, counting in their ranks upwards of 80,000 men. Between himself and Ney he posted D'Erlon with 10,000 men, to act in support of either, as circumstances might require. On the afternoon of the 16th he assaulted the Prussian marshal with terrific fury, but was met with a determined resistance on the part of that unconquerable veteran. The villages of St Amand and Ligny were the principal points of contention. Thrice was each of them carried and regained; in one charge of cavalry Blücher's horse was shot under him, and he, falling beneath it, was ridden over by an entire squadron of French cuirassiers; his own troopers returned to the rescue, and he was borne uninjured from the strife. So desperate and uncertain at length became the encounter, that D'Erlon's corps was called to his assistance by the Emperor; and its mere appearance caused the Prussians to fall back at St Amand. Thereupon Napoleon ordered a decisive attack with the Guard on Ligny, which, after a violent struggle, he succeeded in carrying, and chased the Prussians from the adjacent heights. The latter retreated, but in good order, and on the following day again took post at Wavres, having lost nearly 12,000 men and twenty pieces of cannon, whilst the loss of the French in killed and wounded did not exceed 9000 men. Such was the famed battle of Ligny, so disastrous, but not inglorious, to the arms of resuscitated Prussia.

This brilliant victory, at the very commencement of the campaign, would have been attended with great results on its ultimate issue, but that a countervailing check was experienced on the same day by the lieutenant of the Emperor, the intrepid

Prince de la Moskowa. That celebrated warrior was an indifferent captain, and proved rarely successful when he fought apart from the immediate direction of his tutelary chieftain. On the night of the 15th he easily dislodged a vanguard of Belgians from Frasnes, who fell back on Quatre Bras, where the Prince of Orange was posted with 10,000 Netherlanders. On the following day, instead of attacking Orange before reinforcements could arrive to his aid, he halted during the whole forenoon at Gosselies, between Frasnes and Quatre Bras, and only at noon moved forward, leaving 15,000 men of his army to strengthen D'Erlon at Marchiennes, who stood midway between him and Napoleon as a central reserve to both. At two o'clock he commenced the action, and speedily drove the Belgians before him; but these were met in their retrograde movement by a British division under Picton, and the corps of the Duke of Brunswick, who had marched in all haste from Brussels, and who forthwith restored the battle. The Allies were almost destitute of horse, and had only twenty-eight guns, whereas the French possessed a superb body of cavalry 4000 strong, and forty-six guns. This superiority in two such essential arms was of almost overwhelming advantage to the latter. They charged the allied infantry in repeated onslaughts, but they were resisted with noble fortitude, and were obliged to recoil after sustaining a dreadful carnage. One regiment of Scotch Highlanders, the 42d, was so suddenly assailed when entangled in the midst of a field of tall rye, that two companies failed to fall into the square in time, and were cut off almost to a man. The remainder of the regiment, however, faced its assailants on all sides, and with deadly volleys repulsed the exulting foe. In vain Kellermann, second only to Murat among the French as a general of cavalry, thundered with his heavy horse on the British squares, which were completely enveloped, and raked with incessant showers of ball and grape; they still held firm, and showed their bristling fronts of bayonets, vomiting death among their raging antagonists with ceaseless discharges of musketry, until, appalled at the slaughter of their comrades, the baffled troopers sullenly withdrew. But the conflict was too unequal to have lasted long, and must in the end have inevitably terminated in the destruction of the British and Brunswickers, especially as the Belgians gave way to a shameful panic, and fled precipitately from the scene of danger. Happily for those, his steadfast soldiers, Wellington himself arrived on the field at three o'clock; Alten's division opportunely came up, and again the battle was restored at the critical moment when its fortune seemed sealed. Ney, however, exasperated at the stubborn resistance offered to him, renewed with increased fury his murderous attacks, and at length breaking one of the English squares, cut to pieces the 69th regiment, and captured all its colours. Yet even in this gleam of triumph he began to

despair of success, and sent positive orders to D'Erlon to advance and succour him. It was too late: D'Erlon had been already summoned to the aid of Napoleon; and although he hastened back, he was unable to reach the ground in time to be of any use. In the meanwhile a body of the English Guards had arrived from Brussels; additional detachments poured in from other quarters; and quickly the superiority turned to the side of the Allies. Ney combated still with his usual tenacity, hopeful to keep the strife alive until the junction of D'Erlon; but when at nightfall that commander failed to appear, he was obliged reluctantly to give the signal of retreat, and fell back on Frasnes. The British slept on the field of battle, but they were in no condition to pursue the discomfited marshal. Although they eventually gained the mastery, their loss was greater than that of the French, owing to the disparity in their batteries of artillery: they had to mourn the loss of more than 5000 killed and wounded; whereas the French were crippled by few above 4000 disabled. The brave Duke of Brunswick met his death on this bloody field whilst rallying his gallant corps under the desolating fire of the French artillery. He was the son of the celebrated veteran who had learnt the science of war in the school of Frederick, and had fallen in the calamitous battle of Auerstadt on the day of Jena; he and his followers had sworn a relentless hatred to the French, and with the vow of revenge and death on their lips, had assumed the ominous title of the 'Black Brunswickers.'

The successful stand made by Wellington at Quatre Bras foiled the grand manœuvre of Napoleon, by which he sought to get completely between the two allied armies, and by throwing Ney on the rear of the Prussians, to effect their total destruction. At the same time the retreat of Blücher to Wavres compelled the British general to retire from Quatre Bras, where his left flank was uncovered; and on the 17th, accordingly, he fell back on the forest of Soignies, and took up a position he had already surveyed in front of the hamlet of Waterloo. Here he disposed his troops on the line of heights skirting the valley, which extends over a breadth of two miles from the farmhouse of Hougomont on the right (British) to the village of La Haye on the left, having in the centre of his position the farm buildings of La Haye Sainte, and in the rear the small village and stading of Mont St Jean, after which place the French historians persist in calling the battle that ensued. Napoleon in person followed Wellington with the bulk of the French army, and occupied the corresponding line of heights on the south or opposite side of the valley, resting in the centre on the village of La Belle Alliance, through which the high-road from Brussels ran, and on the extreme right (French) on the straggling village of Planchenoit. The crest of each ridge was manned by the artillery of the respective armies; and on the British side the troops were

stationed behind the reverse slopes of the eminences, so as to be sheltered from the play of the French guns. The numerical strength of the French was greater than that of their opponents; and, what was of greater consequence, much superior in the general quality and homogeneity of their troops. They mustered in all at least 75,000 men, of whom 15,000 were cavalry, and they had 240 guns, served by 4700 artillerymen: almost the whole being veterans of the Grand Army, who had been released from the fortresses held by Napoleon at the conclusion of the war in 1814. On the other hand, the allied host amounted to scarcely 70,000 men, of whom 12,500 were cavalry, with 156 guns; and these included 17,000 Belgians, on whose steadiness or even fidelity little reliance could be placed, and numerous German recruits who had never seen service.* The preponderance, therefore, of the French was very considerable; but, as a counterpoise, they had to attack down one ridge of slopes, across a valley, and up another ridge, during which they must be exposed to a destructive fire. Blücher also might be expected to take part in the coming battle, in which event the Allies would far outnumber the French; but this was uncertain; and to prevent it, Napoleon detached Marshal Grouchy at the head of 35,000 men to observe and keep him in check at Wavres, whilst he was engaged in forcing Wellington at Waterloo, which he did not anticipate much difficulty in accomplishing, and already speculated upon exterminating him in a disastrous retreat through the narrow passes of the forest of Soignies.

Very dismal was the night of the 17th of June, the eve of the battle which was to decide the fate of France and Europe, after the long revolutionary conflict. During the whole of the day a deluge of rain had fallen, drenching the ground, and rendering open bivouacs but sorry and uncomfortable quarters. Yet on each side a spirit of confidence and exultation reigned which blunted the sense of suffering: the French were animated with that unquenchable ardour which the presence of their renowned Emperor never failed to inspire among them, and burned, moreover, to redeem the tarnished lustre of their heroism; the British remembered their deeds of prowess in the Peninsula, and had no dread of defeat under the tried commander who had led them to so many victories; whilst the Germans nourished an animosity against the French which inflamed their valour, and stirred in them the fire that prompts to martial daring. In the

* Napoleon himself allows the composition of his army to have been much superior to that of his opponents when defending himself from the charge of rashness in assuming the offensive. He says, 'The strength of the two armies was not to be estimated by a mere comparison of the numbers, because the allied army was composed of troops more or less efficient, so that one Englishman might be counted for one Frenchman, but two Dutchmen, Prussians, or soldiers of the Confederation, were required to make up one Frenchman.'—*Nap.*, vol. ix., p. 60.

morning the light broke on the magnificent array of the hostile hosts, confronting each other on the opposite heights, with the intermediate hollow between them alone interposing to prevent the instant clash of arms. Loud shouts of impatience and defiance arose from the excited soldiers as they gazed on the opponents they were so soon to encounter; and Napoleon, surveying the position of the British, exclaimed, 'Ah! then I have these English at last!' He delayed, however, to give the signal of battle until eleven in the forenoon, and he pointed his first effort against Hougomont, on which he directed his brother Jerome with a heavy column of 6000 grenadiers. The operations of the battle that followed this onslaught were of a uniform character, and were simply a trial of strength, constancy, and endurance in the contending forces. No art of strategy, unexpected evolution, or cunning device, marked the struggle; all, on the contrary, was plain downright fighting, and the respective situations of the armies gave no opportunity for concealed movements or rapid surprises, such as it was the genius of Napoleon to revel in. Along the two lines, answering each other in responsive roars and flames, the respective artilleries thundered, diffusing death and havoc by their innumerable missiles. Shells phizzed through the air, burst in detonating streaks, destroyed and mutilated with harrowing effect. Bombs, rockets, grenades, mortars, howitzers, every species of projectile by which the life of man might be taken, were discharged with untiring zest in aid of the kindred guns or *mouths of fire*, as they are well called by the French. Down one hill and up the other the dense columns of the French moved to the attack; their powerful cavalry supported them, and swept past the batteries of the British cannon; all but the Belgians stood firm to receive them, and these fled with an ignominious terror or base perfidy, throwing the associated array into almost fatal confusion, and carrying to the rear dastardly accounts of the battle being lost. But it was far otherwise. Every assault of Napoleon's legions was repulsed by the indomitable intrepidity of the British and their auxiliaries: for a time they gained ground at Hougomont and La Haye Sainte, but their success was brief, and they were speedily driven from the positions they had won with dreadful slaughter. About half-past four the appearance of Bulow's Prussian corps on the right of the French operated as a timely diversion in relief of the British. But Napoleon was prepared for this contingency, and he detached a sufficient force under Count Lobau to dislodge Bulow from Planchenoit, which he had already gained on his extreme right. Being aware, however, that another Prussian corps under Ziethen was approaching, and that Blucher himself was toiling through the miry roads to reach the field, whilst he could gain no tidings of Grouchy, whom he had, by repeated messages, summoned to join him, he determined to make a tre-

mendous effort to force the British position before these reinforcements could arrive. He had already directed almost the entire mass of his cavalry, amounting in all to seventy-seven squadrons, to charge along the whole line, forming one of the most terrific onslaughts recorded in military annals; but it had been defeated. After a furious combat of three hours, the British squares, though dreadfully thinned, had sustained and repulsed the shock; the French cavalry was thrown back in disorder upon its own lines, having, after all its heroic efforts, failed to make even a momentary impression upon the steadfast phalanxes of the opposing infantry. Wellington, foreseeing the advantage of reserving his cavalry as long as possible, especially as his strength in that arm was so materially weakened by the defection of the Belgians, kept it back from taking part in this contest, and only launched it in pursuit when the French horsemen, crippled and exhausted, began to retire. The moment, therefore, had now come when the last decisive encounter was to be risked by Napoleon. Viewing the question simply in a military light, it would have been more prudent in him to have discontinued the battle at this period, when, with the chief weight of his forces, and after nearly seven hours' fighting, he had been unable to gain the smallest advantage, and whilst he yet possessed his Guard untouched to protect a retrograde movement; but his situation in every point of view—moral, political, and military—was such that a check would prove ruinous to him; and that both to overawe the democrats of the interior, and to be prepared to resist the invasions of the Austrians and Russians, a victory was absolutely essential to him. Hence, with the full consciousness that a failure must involve the entire ruin of his army, he hesitated not to hazard the final throw for fortune, since he felt the untoward pressure of circumstances, and that the great stake was either to be here won, or his cause be for ever lost.

Thus impelled by the dire exigencies of his fate, the Emperor collected the battalions of his Old and Young Guard, retaining only four as a forlorn reserve; and arranging on their flanks the two corps of Reille and D'Erlon, prepared them in close columns of attack. These picked veterans burned to redeem the honour of the day; their charge had often decided the result of battles when oscillating in the balance, and had never failed to command success; the rest of the troops hailed their advance with repeated acclamations, assured that victory would now, as ever, attend their steps and crown their efforts. The cheers of the men on the right who had driven the Prussians out of Planchenoit added to the exultation, the more especially as Napoleon declared they came from Grouchy's corps, which had followed, and was now repulsing the Prussians. This pardonable deceit he diffused through all the ranks; and taking up a position on the side of the high-road as it emerged into the valley, addressed a few words of

exhortation to each battalion as it passed, urging on all that the time had arrived to conquer or to die for France. Ney headed in person the leading column with his usual ardour; and to the encouraging words of their Emperor the soldiers responded with enthusiastic cries of '*Vive l'Empereur!*' On they move across the plain, and ascend with conquering tread the gentle ascent. The British batteries pour on them incessant volleys, but they heed not the plunging storm of missiles. Ney's horse is shot beneath him, but he flashes his sword aloft, and calling to his soldiers with an inspiring cry, advances on foot. Friant falls at his side, pierced by a ball carrying death in its course. The crest of the ridge is gained, but no enemy is seen to contest their progress; guns still tear the exposed flanks of the columns, but where is the English infantry? It has surely abandoned the field, struck with terror at the approach of these redoubted bands, discomfited by the bare aspect of a countenance which has heretofore made all the warriors of Europe tremble. Not so, however; behind the undulating line of heights, and arranged in a semicircular form, lie the British soldiers, concealed at once from the view and from the fire of the assailing foe. In four serried lines they crouch, the regiments of Guards in the van, and await only the voice of their commander to spring to earth and envelop the protruded column within a convergent fire. Wellington is at hand, and eyes the advance. When it is sufficiently extended, he gives the word, 'Up, Guards, and at them!' and straightway the files of French fall like hay before the scythe. Staggered by this unexpected salute, they pause; they attempt in vain to deploy; the fire is too hot and overwhelming; they recoil. 'Charge!' again cries Wellington; and closing upon the devoted column of the French, the British lines beat back and drive down the slope with terrible slaughter the vaunted champions of Napoleon's might. Not content with this furious attack on the centre of his enemy, the Emperor launches another column of his Guards, 3000 strong, preceded by a cloud of sharpshooters, and flanked by numerous divisions, on the right towards Hougomont; but with no better result, for its progress is stopped by Vandeleur in front, whilst Adam takes it in flank with desolating effect. Frightful chasms are made in the ranks, which are in vain filled up by the valiant grenadiers, who scorn to flinch before an adversary, however overpowering his means of annoyance. But at length the pressure is too severe to withstand; the Imperial Guard sinks—wavers—flies! Then arose the fearful cry among the French, '*Sauve qui peut!*'—'The Guard gives way!' and all rushed tumultuously down the slope. Wellington gives the signal to advance along the whole line, and propels upon the amazed French the cavalry he had so prudently kept in reserve under Vivian and Vandeleur, which sweeps from the field the wearied horse of the French. Napoleon rallies in person the

retreating columns of his army, which he covers by the battalions of the Guards he had held in reserve ; but to win the day is now impossible, and the growing sound of heavy firing on his right warns him that it will be well if he averts a crushing catastrophe.

In truth, after surmounting incredible difficulties from the horrible condition of the roads, Blucher, with the bulk of the Prussian army, appeared at this decisive moment on the field of battle. It was seven in the evening ; yet he had done his utmost to arrive earlier. True to the word he had pledged to Wellington, that he would join him at all hazards, he had moved three divisions of his army from Wavres, leaving only one under Thielman in that position to keep Grouchy in check. He was conscious that the decisive battle of the campaign would be fought at Waterloo, and with rare determination resolved even to sacrifice his rearguard if he could thereby insure the defeat of the principal army under Napoleon. With that view he pushed steadfastly forward across the country, struggling with all the difficulties of the way, undeterred by the certain assurance he had that Thielman was actually engaged with a superior force. At Ohain he came in communication with the extreme left of the British army ; and no sooner was the junction effected, than Bulow, strongly reinforced, again assaulted the French in Planchenoit, and expelled them at the point of the bayonet after a determined resistance. Pelet, who commanded the latter, displayed all the fearless devotedness of a soldier of the Grand Army : he seized an eagle, and called upon his men to rally round and die in defence of it. But no personal intrepidity could avail to turn the fortune of the day ; the British and Prussians pressed forward on all sides, Wellington cheering on his troops with his hat hoisted on the point of his sword. The reserve battalions of the Imperial Guard still stood their ground, and the French artillery played destructively on the advancing conquerors. Lord Uxbridge, afterwards Marquis of Anglesey, had his leg carried off by a cannon-ball as he rode at Wellington's side ; and so thick was the storm of missiles falling around the latter, that he was earnestly exhorted to withdraw from the danger. It was then that he made the celebrated reply which reveals, whilst it sheds such lustre, on his character. 'Never mind,' said he ; 'let them fire away : the battle is gained ;' signifying that his life was of little consequence now that the great object of Napoleon's defeat was accomplished. He continued to head the onward movement, and met Blucher at La Belle Alliance, the centre of the original French position, from which they had been at length routed with precipitation. The Guard retired in order, covering the retreat ; and when summoned to surrender, its commander Cambronne replied in the fine saying, 'The Guard dies, but never surrenders !' the effect of which, however, is somewhat impaired by the unfortunate fact of Cambronne having sub-

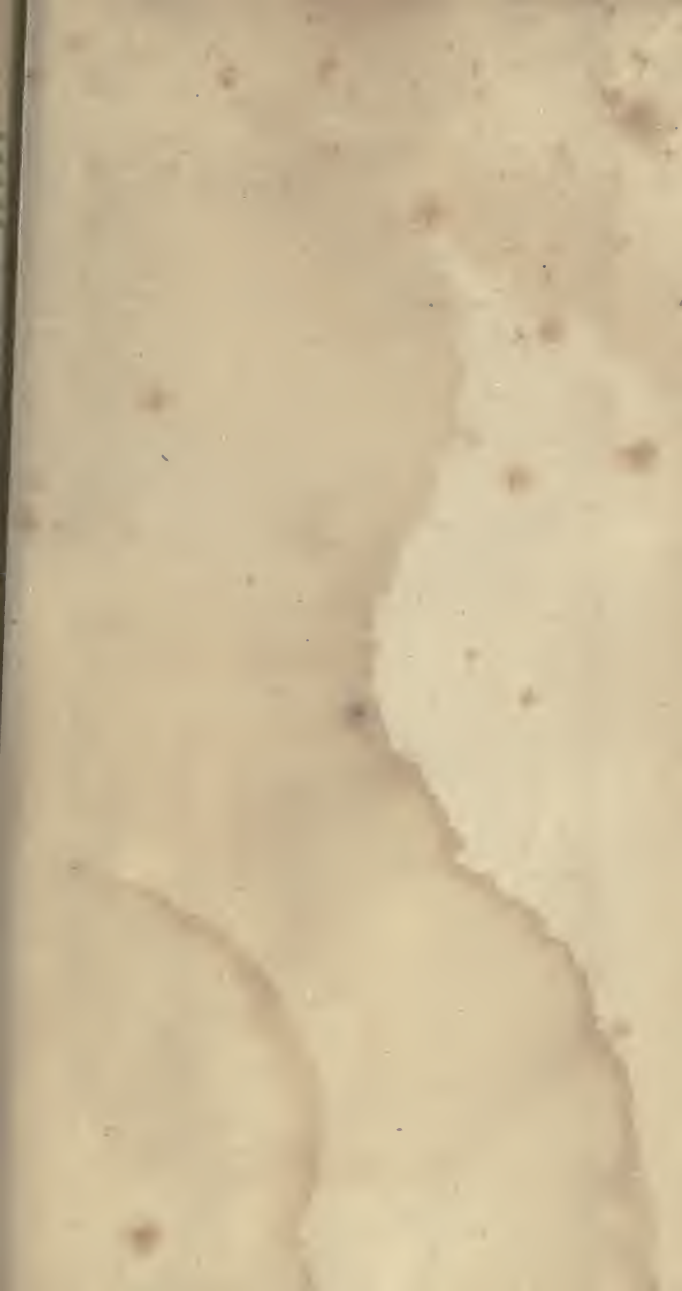
sequently delivered up his own sword to a sergeant of the British Guards. At La Belle Alliance Wellington halted his soldiers, as they were too exhausted by their hard day's work to follow up the pursuit. That task Blucher cheerfully undertook to perform, saying to Wellington, 'Leave the pursuit to me; I will send every man and horse after the enemy.' And he kept his promise, for rarely has a defeated army been pursued with such merciless rigour as the French from Waterloo all the way to Charleroi. After the last repulse of the Imperial Guard, the retreat became an absolute flight, in which no further resistance was attempted. The Prussians allowed not a moment's respite to the flying enemy, and took numerous prisoners at every step. Several times the wearied French paused and prepared to form bivouacs, and as often the blast of the Prussian trumpets startled them from their lair and compelled them to move again. All order was lost; the soldiers dispersed, and fled into the fields, abandoning nearly the whole of their baggage and artillery. Scarcely 40,000 of the immense host that had entered on the campaign a week before ultimately reached and recrossed the Sambre: mere wrecks of an army, utterly disorganised and demoralised; so complete was the ruin which had befallen the only effective force that could be wielded by Napoleon to defend France from invasion, and to save his own fortunes from perdition.

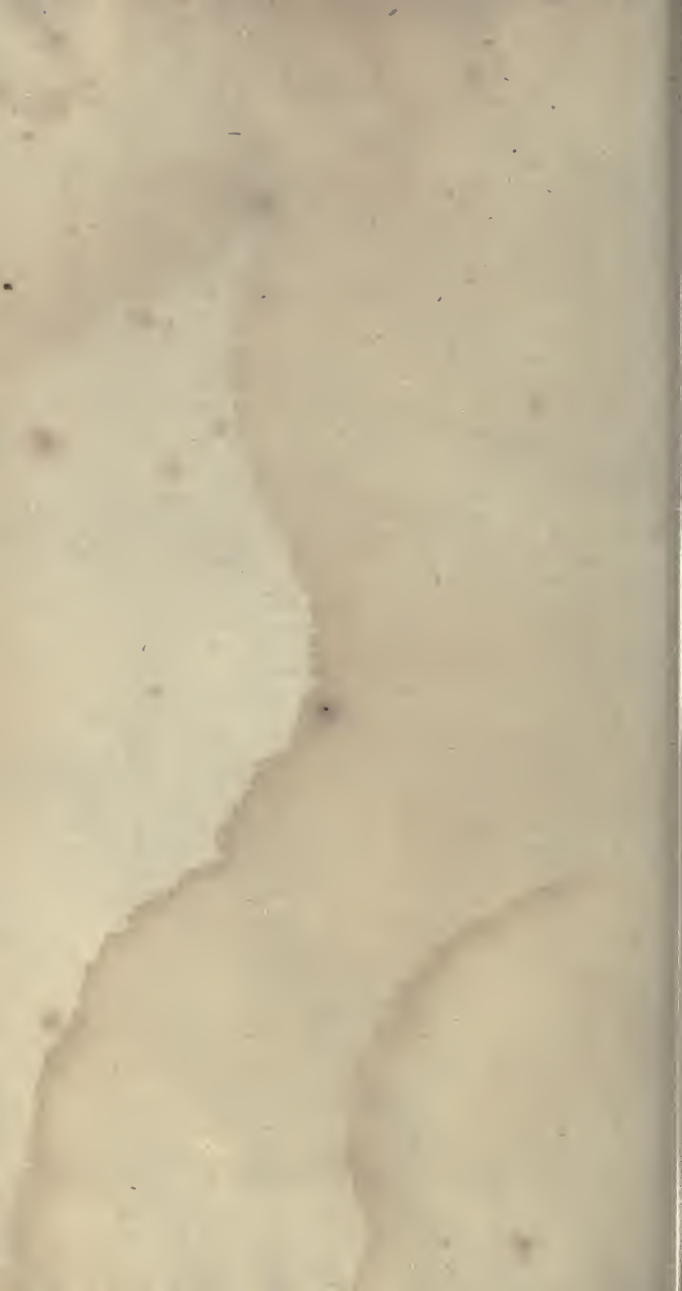
During the whole of the day the Emperor had stood on the heights of La Belle Alliance, an anxious spectator of the battle on which his last hopes of a glorious resurrection were founded. At first he looked on with a curious interest rather than solicitude, extolling the firm resistance of the British troops, but regarding their destruction as certain. He particularly noticed the regiment of Scots Greys during the brilliant charge made by Picton in the early part of the battle, when that heroic leader was shot dead with the words 'Forward, forward! hurrah!' on his lips. 'See those terrible grey horse,' he exclaimed; 'how they work!' Subsequently, when charge after charge was repulsed, and he perceived that all the efforts of his cavalry, however strongly supported by batteries of cannon and infantry, were unavailing, he began to grow more uneasy as to the issue of the conflict, and betrayed considerable emotion. But when he viewed the repulse of his Guard, and the victorious onslaught of the British cavalry, he turned deadly pale, and as he gazed upon the horrifying spectacle, ejaculated as it were mechanically, 'They are all mingled together.' Seeing at length the utter rout of his army by the simultaneous advance of the British and Prussian lines, he retreated behind the shelter of a battalion of the Guard, and turning to General Bertrand, who was by his side, said to him, 'For the present all is over; we have nothing left but to save ourselves.' With these words he put spurs to his horse and galloped off, accompanied by a few followers. He stopped for a few minutes at Quatre Bras to take some refreshment, and then continued his

flight all night, not reaching Charleroi until six o'clock on the following morning. Thence he hastened with all speed to Paris, whither he was the first to carry the news of his sad catastrophe. Grouchy, who has been maligned for not joining him at Waterloo, and who, in assailing the Prussians at Wavres, only obeyed express and reiterated injunctions, manifested more firmness in this hour of disaster, and conducted his army-corps in perfect order across the Sambre, forming a nucleus round which the troops of the defeated army eventually rallied, and constituting a force, incapable certainly of resisting the victorious enemy, but competent to withstand for a moment his advance, and to enable the government perchance to negotiate more favourable terms of settlement.

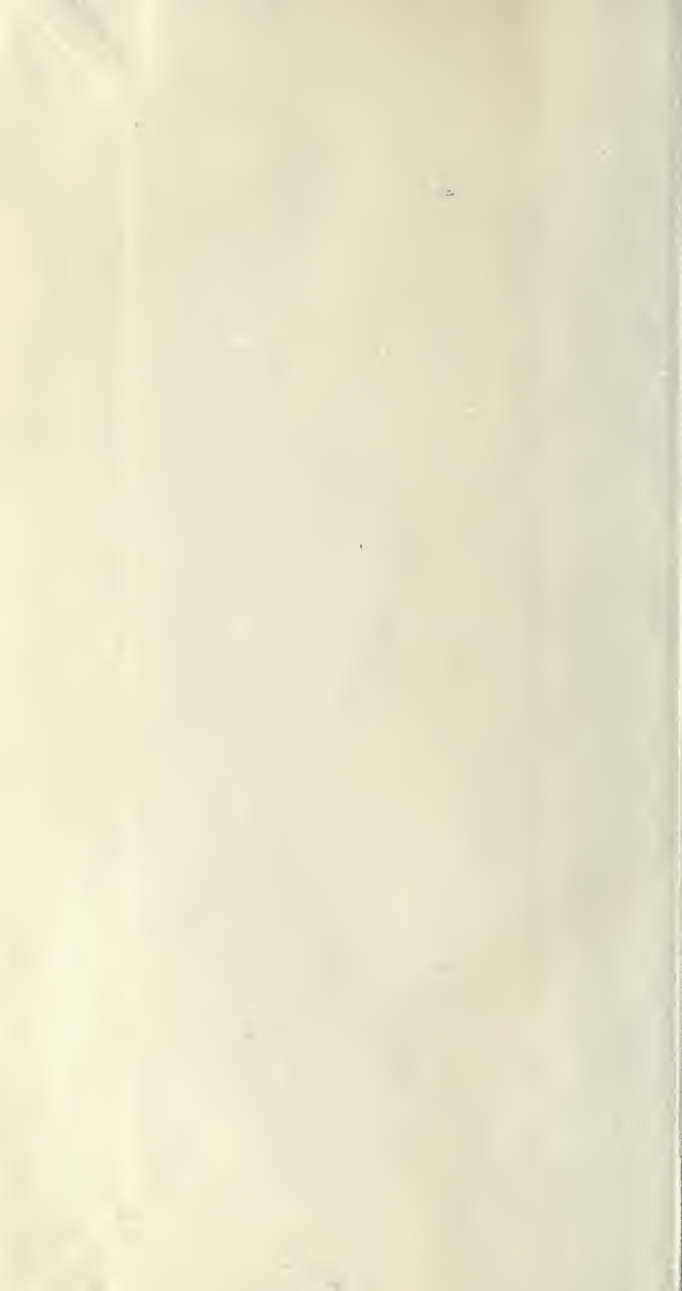
Such was the great battle of Waterloo, which operated so decisively on the destinies of nations after their long internecine struggle. It was even to the conquerors very costly in the loss of blood; to the vanquished most destructive. Upwards of 15,000 British and auxiliaries fell on the field wounded or dead, and the Prussians lost in the whole nearly 7000: but at least 35,000 of the French were stretched on the ground, whilst several thousands were taken prisoners. In its consequences it almost necessarily involved the final suppression of the Revolution, resuscitated for a short interval by Napoleon, but against which the whole of Europe had armed, and was resolute not again to tolerate its dangers or its excesses. The French people had drawn upon themselves once more the bitter animosity of every power in Europe, for they were with reason regarded as inveterate peace-breakers, whom, for the tranquillity of the world, it would be imperative to cripple and to fetter. Different, indeed, was the feeling entertained towards them from that manifested in the previous year, when they were studiously separated from the person and cause of Napoleon. The effect of conciliation had been lost upon them, and after provoking the hostility of considerate, if not magnanimous conquerors, they could anticipate none but the doom of retribution awarded to the perverse, the unloyal, and the turbulent.

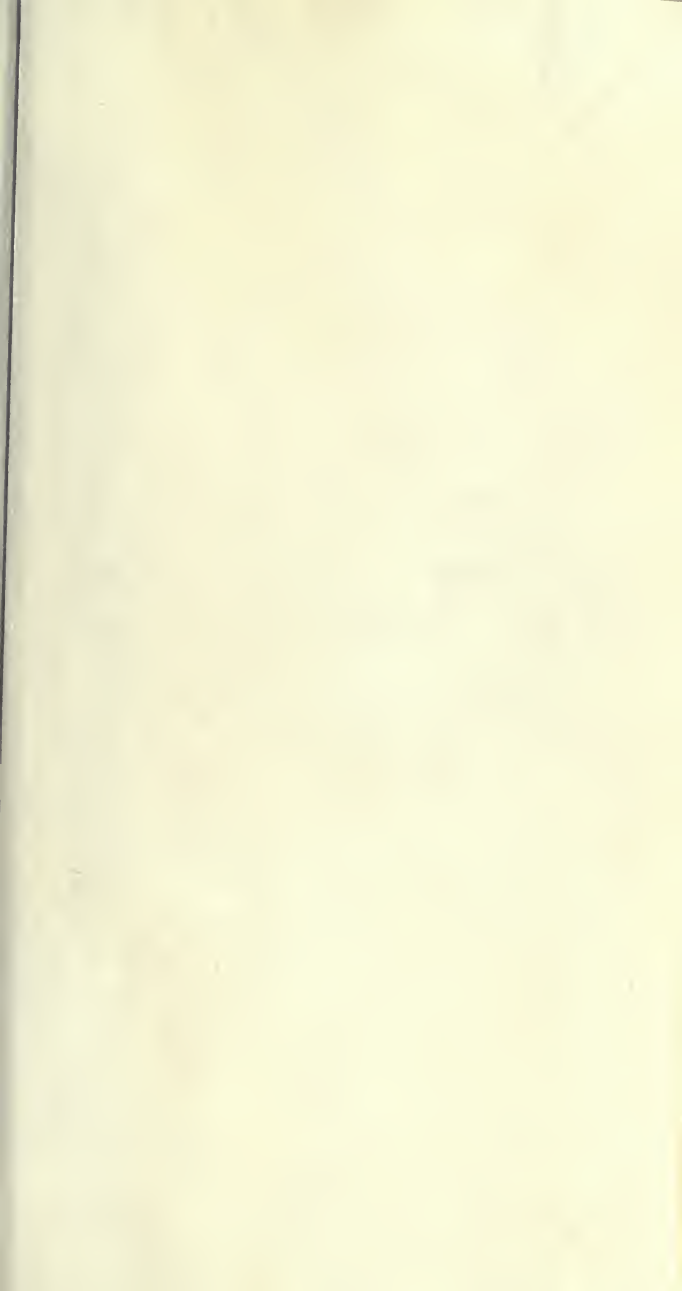
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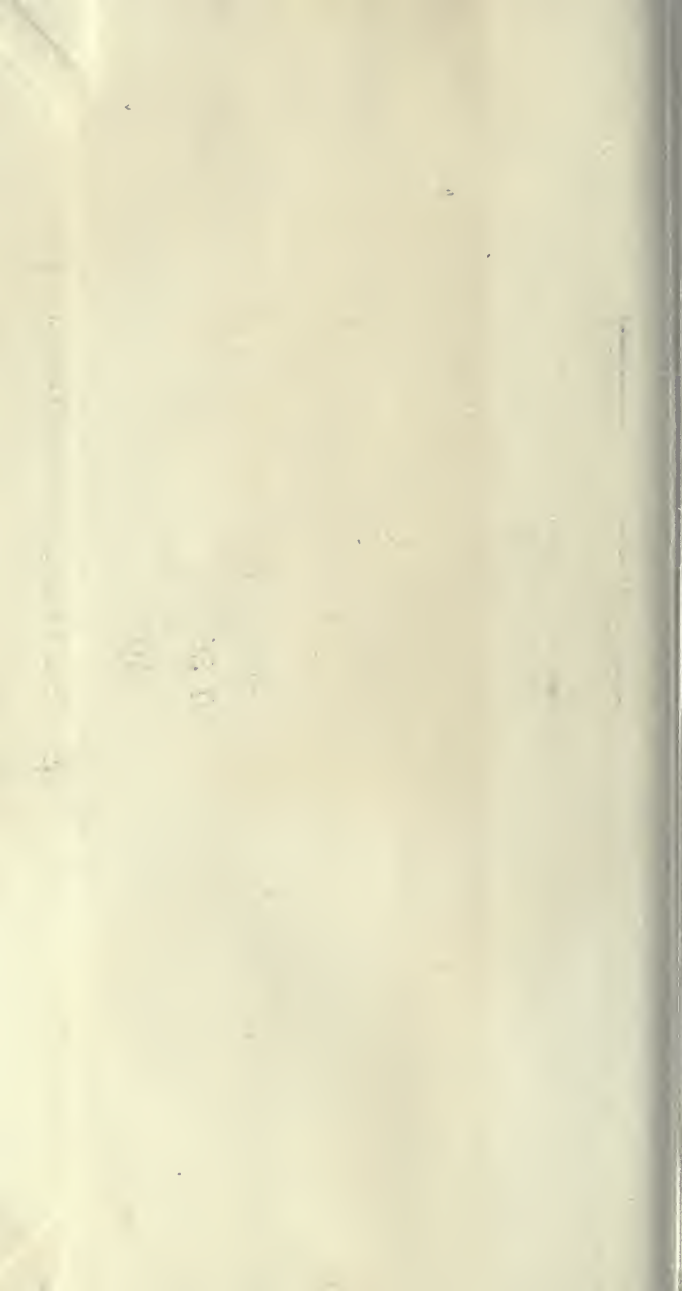












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